

Class PR3550

Book .E30

1466
3853

Elizabeth C. Bishop;
A Christmas Present
from her Husband,
1840

Exhibit A. B. C.
of the
...
...





PARADISE LOST

See book 1 page CXL

THE
POETICAL WORKS.
OF
JOHN MILTON.

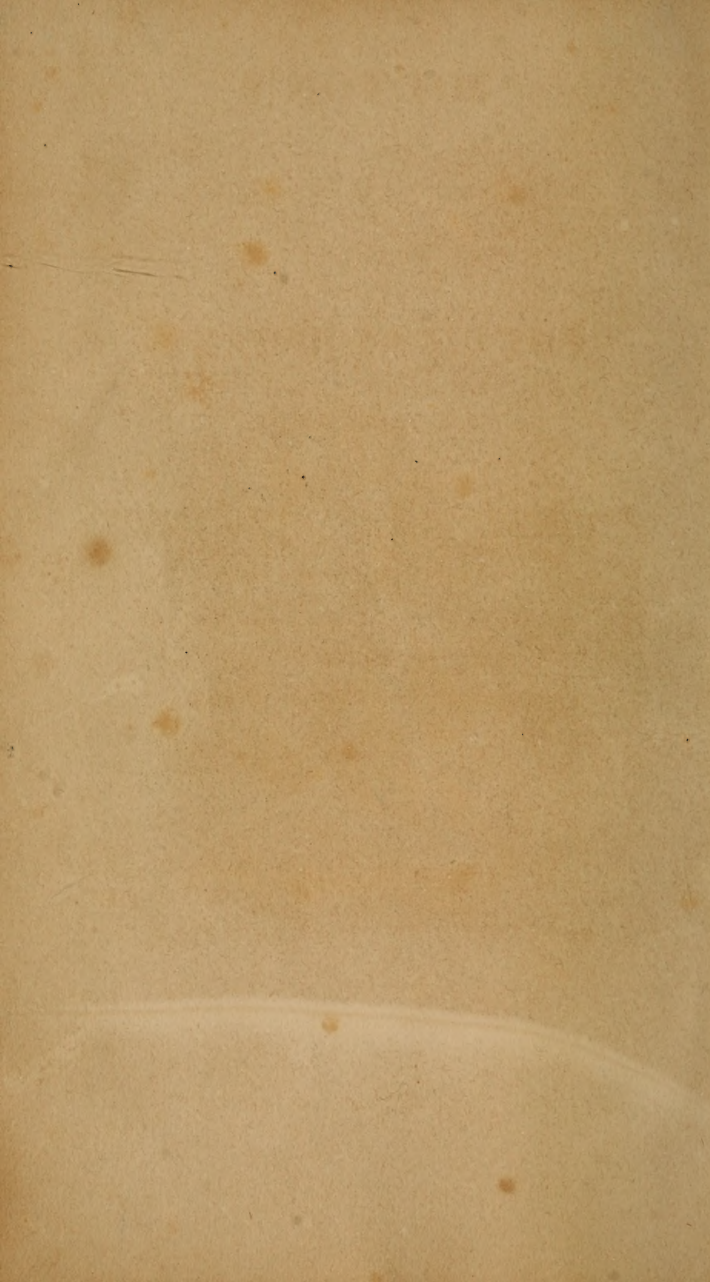


PARADISE LOST

See book 1 page XXIII.

NEW-YORK CHARLES WELLS.

56 Gold Street.



445 821.3
MILTON'S

POETICAL WORKS,

CONSISTING OF PARADISE LOST, PARADISE
REGAINED, MASK OF COMUS, SAMSON
AGONISTES, AND POEMS ON SE-
VERAL OCCASIONS,
&c. &c.

TOGETHER WITH

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY CHARLES WELLS,

PR 3550
E 30

Transfer
Engineers School Liby.
June 29, 1931

PIERCY & REED, Printers, 9, Spruce-st., N. Y.

CONTENTS
OF
PARADISE LOST.

LIFE OF MILTON,		5
The Verse,		11
Book I,		15
Book II,		39
Book III,		69
Book IV,		91
Book V,		121
Book VI,		147
Book VII,		173
Book VIII,		193
Book IX,		213
Book X,		247
Book XI,		279
Book XII,		305



THE LIFE

OF

JOHN MILTON.

FROM a family and town of his name in Oxfordshire, our author derived his descent: but he was born at London, in the year 1608. His father, John Milton, by profession a scrivener, lived in a reputable manner on a competent estate, entirely his own acquisition, having been early disinherited by his parents for renouncing the communion of the church of Rome, to which they were zealously devoted.

Our author was the favourite of his father's hopes, who, to cultivate the great genius which early displayed itself, was at the expense of a domestic tutor, whose care and capacity his pupil hath gratefully celebrated in an excellent Latin elegy. At his initiation he is said to have applied himself to letters with such indefatigable industry, that he rarely was prevailed upon to quit his studies before midnight; which not only made him frequently subject to severe pains in his head, but likewise occasioned that weakness in his eyes, which terminated in a total privation of sight. From a domestic education he was removed to St. Paul's school, to complete his acquaintance with the classics, under the care of Dr. Gill; and, after a short stay there, was transplanted to Christ's College, in Cambridge, where he distinguished himself in all kinds of academical exercises. Of this society he continued a member till he commenced master of arts; and then, leaving the university, he returned to his father, who had quitted the town, and lived at Horton, in Buckinghamshire, where he pursued his studies with unparalleled assiduity and success.

After some years spent in this studious retirement, his mother died, and then he prevailed with his father to gratify an inclination

he had long entertained of seeing foreign countries. Sir Henry Wotton, at that time provost of Eton College, gave him a letter of advice for the direction of his travels. Having employed his curiosity about two years in France and Italy, on the news of a civil war breaking out in England, he returned, without taking a survey of Greece and Sicily, as at his setting out the scheme was projected. At Paris the lord viscount Scudamore, ambassador from king Charles I, at the court of France, introduced him to the acquaintance of Grotius, who at that time was honoured with the same character there by Christiana, queen of Sweden. In Rome, Genoa, Florence, and other cities of Italy, he contracted a familiarity with those who were of highest reputation for wit and learning, several of whom gave him very obliging testimonies of their friendship and esteem.

Returning from his travels, he found England on the point of being involved in blood and confusion. He retired to lodgings provided for him in the city; which being commodious for the reception of his sister's sons, and some other young gentlemen, he undertook their education.

In this philosophical course he continued, without a wife till the year 1643, when he married Mary, the daughter of Richard Powell, of Forest-Hill in Oxfordshire, a gentleman of estate and reputation in that county, and of principles so very opposite to his son-in-law, that the marriage is more to be wondered at than the separation which ensued, in little more than a month after she had cohabited with him in London. Her desertion provoked him both to write several treatises concerning the doctrine and discipline of divorce, and also to pay his addresses to a young lady of great wit and beauty; but, before he had engaged her affections to conclude the marriage treaty, in a visit at one of his relations, he found his wife prostrate before him, imploring forgiveness and reconciliation. It is not to be doubted but an interview of that nature, so little expected, must wonderfully affect him; and perhaps the impressions it made on his imagination, contributed much to the painting of that pathetic scene in *Paradise Lost*,* in which Eve addresseth herself to Adam for pardon and peace. At the intercession of his friends who were present, after a short reluctance, he generously sacrificed all his resentment to her tears:

———soon his heart relented
Towards her, his life so late and sole delight
Now at his feet submissive in distress.

And after this reunion, so far was he from retaining any unkind memory of the provocations which he had received from her ill conduct, that when the king's cause was entirely suppressed, and her father, who had been active in his loyalty, was exposed to se-

* Book x, page 171.

questration, Milton received both him and his family to protection, and free entertainment, in his own house, till their affairs were accommodated by his interest in the victorious faction.

A commission to constitute him adjutant general to sir William Waller was promised, but soon superceded, by Waller's being laid aside, when his masters thought it proper to new model their army. However, the keenness of his pen had so effectually recommended him to Cromwell's esteem, that, when he took the reins of government into his own hand, he advanced him to be Latin secretary, both to himself and the parliament; the former of these preferments he enjoyed both under the usurper and his son, the other until king Charles II was restored. For some time he had an apartment for his family at Whitehall: but his health requiring a freer accession of air, he was obliged to remove from thence to lodgings which opened into St. James' Park. Not long after his settlement there, his wife died in childbed; and much about the time of her death, a guttaserena, which had for several years been gradually increasing, totally extinguished his sight. In this melancholy condition, he was easily prevailed with to think of taking another wife, who was Catharine, the daughter of captain Woodcock, of Hackney; and she too, in less than a year after their marriage, died in the same unfortunate manner as the former had done; and in his twenty-third sonnet he does honour to her memory.

Being a second time a widower, he employed his friend Dr. Paget to make choice of a third consort, on whose recommendation he married Elizabeth, the daughter of Mr. Minshul, a Cheshire gentleman, by whom he had no issue. Three daughters, by his first wife, were then living; the two elder of whom are said to have been very serviceable to him in his studies; for having been instructed to pronounce not only the modern, but also the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, they read in their respective originals, whatever authors he wanted to consult, though they understood none but their mother tongue.

We come now to take a survey of him in that point of view, in which he will be looked upon by all succeeding ages with equal delight and admiration. An interval of about twenty years had elapsed since he wrote the *Mask of Comus*, *L' Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, and *Lycidas*, all in such an exquisite strain, that though he had left no other monuments of his genius behind him, his name had been immortal; but neither the infirmities of age and constitution, nor the vicissitudes of fortune, could depress the vigour of his mind, or divert it from executing a design he had long conceived of writing an heroic poem.* The fall of man was a subject that he had some years before fixed on for a tragedy, which he intended to form by the models of antiquity; and some, not without probability say, the play opened with that speech in the fourth book of *Para-*

* *Paradise Lost*, Book IX, page 213.

dise Lost, l. 32, which is addressed by satan to the sun. Were it material, I believe I could produce other passages, which more plainly appear to have been originally intended for the scene: but whatever truth there may be in this report, it is certain, that he did not begin to mould his subject, in the form which it bears now, before he had concluded his controversy with Salmasius, and More, when he had wholly lost the use of his eyes, and was forced to employ, in the office of an amanuensis, any friend who accidentally paid him a visit. Yet under all these discouragements, and various interruptions, in the year 1669, he published his *Paradise Lost*, the noblest poem (next to those of Homer and Virgil) that ever the wit of man produced in any age or nation. Need I mention any other evidence of its inestimable worth, than that the finest geniuses who have succeeded him, have ever esteemed it a merit, to relish and illustrate its beauties?

And now, perhaps, it may pass for a fiction, what with great veracity I affirm to be fact, that *Milton*, after having with much difficulty prevailed to have this divine poem licensed for the press, could sell the copy for no more than fifteen pounds: the payment of which valuable consideration depended upon the sale of three numerous impressions. So unreasonably may personal prejudice affect the most excellent performances!

About two years after, he published *Paradise Regained*; but *Oh, what a falling off was there!*—of which I will say no more, than that there is scarcely a more remarkable instance of the frailty of human reason than our author gave, in preferring this poem to *Paradise Lost*.

And thus having attended him to the sixty-sixth year of his age, as closely as such imperfect lights as men of letters and retirement usually leave to guide our inquiry would allow, it now only remains to be recorded, that, in the year 1674, the gout put a period to his life, at Bunhill, near London; from whence his body was conveyed to St. Giles' church, by Cripplegate, where it lies interred in the chancel, and a neat monument has lately been erected to perpetuate his memory.

In his youth he is said to have been extremely handsome; the colour of his hair was a light brown, the symmetry of his features exact, enlivened with an agreeable air, and a beautiful mixture of fair and ruddy. His stature, (as we find it measured by himself) did not exceed the middle size, neither too lean nor corpulent; his limbs well proportioned, nervous and active, serviceable in all respects to his exercising the sword, in which he much delighted and wanted neither skill nor courage to resent an affront from men of the most athletic constitutions. In his diet he was abstemious; not delicate in the choice of his dishes; and strong liquors of all kinds were his aversion. His deportment was erect, open, affable; his conversation easy, cheerful, instructive; his wit on all occasions at command, facetious, grave, or satirical, as the subject required. His judgment, when disengaged from religious and political speculations, was just and penetrating, his apprehension quick, his me-

mory tenacious of what he read, his reading only not so extensive as his genius, for that was universal. And having treasured up such immense store of science, perhaps the faculties of his soul grew more vigorous after he was deprived of sight : and his imagination, (naturally sublime and enlarged by reading romances, of which he was much enamoured in his youth,) when it was wholly abstracted from material objects, was more at liberty to make such amazing excursions into the ideal world, when in composing his divine work he was tempted to range,

Beyond the visible diurnal sphere.

With so many accomplishments, not to have had some faults and misfortunes to be laid in the balance, with the fame and felicity of writing *Paradise Lost*, would have been too great a portion for humanity.

ELIJAH FENTON.

THE VERSE

THE measure is English heroic verse without rhyme, as that of Homer in Greek, and of Virgil in Latin; rhyme being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter, and lame metre; graced, indeed, since, by the use of some famous modern poets, carried away by custom, but much to their own vexation, hinderance, and constraint, to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse than else they would have expressed them. Not without cause, therefore, some, both Italian and Spanish poets, of prime note, have rejected rhyme, both in longer and shorter works, as have also long since our best English tragedies, as a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, trivial and of no true musical delight; which consists only in apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another, not in the jingling sound of like endings, a fault avoided by the learned ancients, both in poetry and all good oratory. This neglect then of rhyme so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may seem so perhaps to vulgar readers, that it is rather to be esteemed an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem, from the troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming.

THE
FIRST BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

THIS first book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, Man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise wherein he was placed : Then touches the prime cause of his fall, the Serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent ; who revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of Angels, was by the command of God driven out of Heaven with all his crew into the great deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastens into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his angels now falling into Hell described here, not in the centre (for Heaven and Earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed,) but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos : Here Satan with his Angels lying on the burning lake, thunderstruck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him ; they confer of their miserable fall, Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded. They rise, their numbers, array of battle, their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them lastly of a new world and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy, or report in Heaven ; for that Angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many Ancient Fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the palace of Satan rises, suddenly built out of the deep : The infernal peers there sit in council.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

OF man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our wo,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, heav'nly Muse, that on the sacred top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That Shepherd,* who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning, how the heav'ns and earth
Rose out of chaos: or if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook, that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my advent'rous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet, in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument

* "That Shepherd," Moses, who kept the flock of Jethro.

I may assert eternal providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first, for heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of hell; say first, what cause
Mov'd our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favour'd of heav'n so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal serpent; he it was, whose guile,
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host
Of rebel angels: by whose aid, aspiring
To set himself in glory, above his peers,
He trusted to have equall'd the Most High,
If he oppos'd; and, with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God,
Rais'd impious war in heav'n, and battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the almighty power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantyne chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded, though immortal: but his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness, and lasting pain,
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witness'd huge affliction and dismay,
Mix'd with obdurate pride and steadfast hate:
At once, as far as angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild;
A dungeon horrible on all sides round,
As one great furnace flam'd; yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible

Serv'd only to discover sights of wo,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd:
Such place eternal justice had prepar'd
For those rebellious; here their pris'n ordain'd
In utter darkness, and their portion set
As far remov'd from God and light of heav'n,
As from the centre thrice to th' utmost pole.
O how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns; and welt'ring by his side
One next himself in pow'r, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd
Beelzebub. To whom th' arch-enemy,
And thence in heav'n called Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:

If thou beest he; but O how fall'n! how chang'd
From him, who, in the happy realms of light,
Cloth'd with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
Myriads though bright! If he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise
Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd
In equal ruin! Into what pit thou seest,
From what height fall'n; so much the stronger prov'd
He with his thunder: and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? yet not for those,
Nor what the potent victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change.
Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,
And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,

His utmost pow'r with adverse pow'r oppos'd
In dubious battle on the plains of heav'n,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost: th' unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome;
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
Who from the terror of this arm so late
Doubted his empire; that were low indeed,
That were an ingnominy, and shame beneath
This downfall; since, by fate, the strength of gods
And this empyreal substance cannot fail;
Since, through experience of this great event,
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanc'd,
We may with more successful hope, resolve
To wage, by force or guile, eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand foe,
Who now triumphs, and, in th' excess of joy
Sole reigning, holds the tyranny of heaven.

So spake th' apostate angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair:
And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer:

O prince, O chief of many throned powers,
That led th' embattl'd seraphim to war,
Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds
Fearless, endanger'd heav'n's perpetual King,
And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate
Too well I see and rue the dire event,
That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as gods and heav'nly essences
Can perish: for the mind and spirit remain
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
Though all our glory extinct, and happy state

Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
But what if he our conqueror (whom, I now
Of force believe Almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'erpower'd such force as ours)
Have left us in this our spirit and strength entire,
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his bus'ness be,
Here in the heart of hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep;
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being,
To undergo eternal punishment?

Whereto with speedy words th' arch-fiend replied:

Fall'n cherub! to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suff'ring; but of this be sure,
To do aught good, never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
But see! the angry victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit,
Back to the gates of heav'n; the sulphurous hail,
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown, hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice
Of heav'n receiv'd us falling; and the thunder,
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,
Or satiate fury, yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,

The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
There rest if any rest can harbour there:
And, re-assembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy; our own loss how repair;
How overcome this dire calamity;
What reinforcement we may gain from hope;
If not what resolution from despair.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate,
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blaz'd, his other parts beside,
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood; in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or earth-born, that warr'd on Jove:
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held; or that sea beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream:
Him, haply slumb'ring on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night founder'd skiff
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fix'd anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wish'd morn delays:
So stretched out huge in length, the arch-fiend lay
Chain'd on the burning lake: nor ever thence
Had risen or heav'd his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling heav'n
Left him at large to his own dark designs;
That with reiterated crimes, he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others; and, enrag'd, might see
How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy shown
On man by him seduced, but on himself

Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance pour'd.
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames,
Driv'n backward, slope their pointing spires, and roll'd
In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air
That felt unusual weight; till on dry land
He lights, if it were land that ever burn'd
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire;
And such appear'd in hue: as when the force
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
Of thund'ring *Ætna*, whose combustible
And fuell'd entrails, thence conceiving fire,
Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate,
Both glorying to have 'scap'd the Stygian flood
As gods, and by their own recover'd strength,
Not by the suff'rance of supernal power.

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
Said then the lost arch-angel, this the seat
That we must change for heaven; this mournful
For that celestial light? Be it so! since he [gloom
Who now is sov'reign can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reason hath equall'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals! Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells. Hail horrors! hail
Infernal world! and thou profoundest hell,
Receive thy new possessor! one who brings
A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heav'n.
What matter where if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least

We shall be free : th' Almighty hath not built
Here, for his envy will not drive us hence :
Here we may reign secure, and in my choice,
To reign is worth ambition, though in hell :
Better to reign in hell, than serve in heav'n !
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
Th' associates and copartners of our loss,
Lie thus astonish'd on th' oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part,
In this unhappy mansion ; or once more
With ralli'd arms, to try what may be yet
Regain'd in heav'n, or what more lost in hell ?

So Satan spake, and him Beelzebub
Thus answer'd : Leader of those armies bright,
Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foiled !
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battle when it rag'd, in all assaults
Their surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage, and revive, though now they lie
Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
As we ere while, astounded and amaz'd ;
No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious height.

He scarce had ceas'd, when the superior fiend
Was moving to the shore : his pond'rous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast ; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great admiral, were but a wand,
He walk'd with, to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marle, not like those steps
On heaven's azure ; and the torrid clime

Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire :
Nathless he so endur'd, till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea, he stood, and call'd
His legions, angel forms, who lay entranc'd
Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades,
High over-arch'd, embow'r ; or scatter'd sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd
Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore, their floating carcasses
And broken chariot wheels : so thick bestrown,
Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change,
He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of hell resounded. Princes, potentates,
Warriors, the flower of heav'n ! once yours, now lost !
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal spirits ; or have ye chosen this place,
After the toil of battle, to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find
To slumber here, as in the vales of heav'n ?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
T' adore the conqueror, who now beholds
Cherub and seraph rolling in the flood,
With scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon
His swift pursuers from heav'n's gates discern
Th' advantage, and descending, tread us down
Thus drooping, or with link'd thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf ?
wake, arise, or be for ever fall'n !

They heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprang
Upon the wing ; as when men wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse, and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel ;

Yet to their general's voice they soon obey'd
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Wav'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad angels seen
Hovering on wing under the cope of hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted spear
Of their great sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain;
A multitude, like which the populous north
Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barb'rous sons
Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands.
Forthwith from every squadron, and each band,
The heads, and leaders, thither haste where stood
Their great commander; godlike shapes, and forms
Excelling human; princely dignities,
And pow'rs that erst in heaven sat on thrones;
Though of their names in heav'nly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and raz'd
By their rebellion, from the book of life.
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names, till, wand'ring o'er the earth,
Through God's high suff'rance for the trial of man;
By falsities and lies, the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and th' invisible
Glory of him that made them, to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
With gay religions, full of pomp and gold,
And devils to adore for deities:
Then were they known to men by various names,

And various idols through the heathen world. [last,
Say, Muse, their names then known ; who first, who
Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery couch,
At their great emp'ror's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof.
The chief were those, who, from the pit of hell
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats long after, next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar ; gods ador'd
Among the nations round ; and durst abide
Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
Between the cherubim ; yea, often plac'd
Within his sanctuary itself, their shrines,
Abominations ; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profan'd,
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First, Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears,
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children's cries unheard, that passed through
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite [fire
Worshipp'd in Rabba and her wat'ry plain,
In Argob, and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon ; nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon, he led by fraud, to build
His temple right against the temple of God,
On that opprobrious hill ; and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of hell.
Next, Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,
From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim : in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flow'ry dale of Sibma clad with vines,
And Eleale to th' Asphaltic pool.
Peor his other name, when he entic'd
Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,

To do him wanton rites, which cost them wo.
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarg'd
E'en to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate ;
Till good Josiah drove them thence to hell.
With these came they, who, from the bord'ring flood
Of old Euphrates, to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baalim and Ashtorath, those male,
These feminine : for spirits, when they please,
Can either sex assume, or both ; so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure,
Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh ; but, in what shape they choose
Dilated or condens'd, bright or obscure,
Can execute their airy purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfil.
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their living strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial gods ; for which their heads as low
Bow'd down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd
Astarte, queen of Heav'n, with crescent horns :
To whose bright image nightly by the moon,
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs ;
In Sion, also not unsung, where stood
Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon, allur'd
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties all a summer's day,
While smooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded : the love-tale

Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch,
Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,
His eye survey'd the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourn'd in earnest when the captive ark
Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopt off
In his own temple, on the grunsel edge,*
Where he fell flat, and sham'd his worshippers.
Dagon his name, sea monster, upward man
And downward fish : yet had his temple high
Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron, and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
He also 'gainst the house of God was bold :
A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king,
Ahaz, his sottish conqu'ror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage, and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious off'rings, and adore the gods
Whom he had vanquish'd. After these, appear'd
A crew, who, under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
With monstrous shapes and sorceries, abus'd
Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek
Their wand'ring gods, disguis'd in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
Th' infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd
The calf in Oreb ; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox,
Jehovah, who in one night, when he pass'd
From Egypt marching, equall'd with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.

* "Grunsel, or groundsil edge:" the threshold of the temple-gate.

Belial came last, than whom, a spirit more lewd
Fell not from heav'n, or more gross to love
Vice for itself: to him no temple stood,
Or altar smok'd: yet who more oft than he
In temples, and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist? as did Eli's sons, who fill'd
With lust and violence the house of God!

 In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury, and outrage: and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Expos'd a matron to avoid worse rape.
These were the prime in order, and in might;
The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,
Th' Ionian gods, of Javan's issue, held
Gods, yet confess'd later than heav'n and earth,
Their boasted parents: Titan, heav'n's first-born,
With his enormous brood, and birthright seiz'd
By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove,
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;
So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Crete
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top
Of cold Olympus, rul'd the middle air,
Their highest Heav'n; or on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old
Fled o'er Adria to th' Hesperian fields,
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.

 All these and more came flocking; but with looks
Down-cast and damp; yet such wherein appear'd
Obscure some glimpse of joy, t' have found their chief
Not in despair, t' have found themselves not lost
In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast
Like doubtful hue: but he, his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore

Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears.
Then straight commands that at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud, and clarions, be uprear'd
His mighty standard: that proud honour claim'd
Azazel as his right, a cherub tall;
Who forthwith from the glitt'ring staff unfurl'd
Th' imperial ensign, which full high advanc'd,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich emblaz'd,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host up-sent
A shout, that tore hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
With orient colours waving: with them rose
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
Appear'd, and serried shields* in thick array,
Of depth immeasurable: anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders; such as rais'd
To height of noblest temper, heroes old
Arming to battle; and, instead of rage,
Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd
With dread of death to flight, or foul retreat;
Nor wanting pow'r to mitigate and 'swage
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
Breathing united force, with fix'd thought,
Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil; and now
Advanc'd in view they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old, with order'd spear and shield,

* "Serried shield;" locked; from the French *Serrer*

Awaiting what command their mighty chief
Had to impose : he through the armed files
Darts his experienc'd eye, and soon traverse
The whole battallion, views their order due.
Their visages and stature as of gods ;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hard'ning, in his strength
Glories : for never since created man,
Met such embodi'd force, as nam'd with these,
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warr'd on by cranes ; though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were join'd
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mix'd with auxiliar gods ; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son,
Begirt with British and Armoric knights ;
And all who since, baptiz'd or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban.
Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisonde,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
When Charlemagne with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabbia. Thus far these, beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
Their dread commander : he, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower : his form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appear'd
Less than archangel ruin'd, and th' excess
Of glory obscur'd : as when the sun, new risen,
Looks through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of his beams ; or from behind the moon
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darken'd so, yet shone
Above them all, th' archangel : but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge : cruel his eye, but cast

Signs of remorse and passion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,
(Far other once beheld in bliss,) condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain,
Millions of spirits for his fault amerc'd
Of heav'n, and from eternal splendours flung
For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory wither'd: as when heaven's fire
Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
With all his peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he assay'd, and thrice in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth! at last
Words, interwove with sighs, found out their way.

O myriads of immortal spirits! O powers
Matchless, but with th' Almighty! and that strife
Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter! but what pow'r of mind,
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past, or present, could have fear'd
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied heav'n, shall fail to reascend,
Self-rais'd, and repossess their native seat?
For me, be witness all the host of heaven,
If counsels different, or dangers shunn'd
By me, have lost our hopes. But he, who reigns
Monarch in heav'n, till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom, and his regal state
Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,

So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war provok'd ! our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not : that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds ; whereof so rife
There went a fame in heav'n that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation, whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the sons of heaven ;
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere :
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial spirits in bondage, nor th' abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature : peace is despair'd ;
For who can think submission ? War then, war
Open or understood, must be resolv'd.

He spake : and to confirm his words, out flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty cherubim ; the sudden blaze
Far round illumin'd hell : highly they rag'd
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of heav'n.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belch'd fire and rolling smoke ; the rest entire
Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither, wing'd with speed,
A num'rous brigade hasten'd : as when bands
Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe arm'd,
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on,
Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell
From heav'n ; for e'en in heaven his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of heaven's pavement, trodden gold,

Than ought divine or holy else enjoy'd
In vision beatific ; by him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransack'd the centre, and with impious hands,
Rifled the bowels of their mother earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,
And digg'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire
That riches grow in hell ; that soil may best
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those,
Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring, tell
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
And strength, and art, are easily outdone
By spirits reprobate, and in an hour
What in an age they, with incessant toil
And hands innumerable, scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain in many cells prepar'd,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluic'd from the lake, a second multitude
With wond'rous art founded the massy ore,
Sev'ring each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross ;
A third as soon had form'd within the ground
A various mould, and from the boiling cells
By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook :
As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
To many a row of pipes the soundboard breathes.
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave ; nor did they want
Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven ,
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo, such magnificence
Equall'd in all their glories, to enshrine
Belus or Serapis, their gods, or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove

In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile
Stood fix'd her stately height ; and straight the doors,
Opening their brazen folds, discover wide
Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth
And level pavement ; from the arched roof
Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring enter'd ; and the work some praise,
And some the architect : his hand was known
In heaven by many a tower'd structure high,
Where scepter'd angels held their residence,
And sat as princes, whom the supreme King
Exalted to such a pow'r, and gave to rule,
Each in his hierachy, the orders bright.
Nor was his name unheard or unador'd
In ancient Greece ; and in Ausonian land
Men call'd him Mulciber ; and how he fell
From heaven, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements : from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eye,
A summer's day ; and with the setting sun
Dropt from the zenith like a falling star,
On Lemnos th' Ægean isle : thus they relate,
Erring ; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before ; nor aught avail'd him now
T' have built in heav'n high tow'rs ; nor did he 'scape
By all his engines, but was headlong sent
With his industrious crew to build in hell.

Meanwhile the winged heralds, by command
Of sov'reign pow'r, with awful ceremony
And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council, forthwith to be held
At Pandemonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his peers : their summons call'd
From every band and squared regiment
By place or choice the worthiest ; they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came

Attended: all access was throng'd; the gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
(Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldan's chair,
Defied the best of Panim chivalry
To mortal combat, or career with lance)
Thick swarm'd both on the ground, and in the air
Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
In spring time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth the pop'lous youth about the hive
In clusters; they among fresh dewes and flow'rs
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel
New rubb'd with balm, expatiate and confer
Their state affairs. So thick the airy crowd
Swarm'd and were straiten'd; till, the signal given,
Behold a wonder! They but now who seem'd
In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless; like that pygmean race
Beyond the Indian mount; or fairy elves,
Whose midnight revels, by a forest side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while over-head the moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth
Wheels her pale course; they, on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
Reduc'd their shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still, amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions, like themselves,
The great seraphic lords and cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat;
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began

THE
SECOND BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven : Some advise it, others dissuade : A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in Heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal, or not much inferior to themselves, about this time to be created : Their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search ; Satan, their chief, undertakes alone the voyage, is honoured and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them, by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven ; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the Power of that place, to the sight of the new world which he sought.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK II.

HIGH on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus, and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous east with richest hand
Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd
To that bad eminence ; and from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
Vain war with heav'n, and by success untaught,
His proud imaginations thus display d.

Pow'rs and Dominions, Deities of heav'n,
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigour, though oppress'd and fallen,
I give not heav'n for lost. From this descent
Celestial virtues rising, will appear
More glorious and more dread than from no fall ,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
Me, though just right, and the fix'd laws of heav'n,
Did first create your leader, next free choice,
With what besides, in council or in fight,
Hath been achiev'd of merit, yet this loss
Thus far at least recover'd hath much more
Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne,
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior ; but who here

Will envy whom the highest place, exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thund'rer's aim,
Your bulwark, and condemns to greater share
Of endless pain? where there is then no good
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction; for none sure will claim in hell
Precedence, none whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then
To union and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in heav'n, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assur'd us; and by what best way,
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate; who can advise, may speak.

He ceas'd, and next him Moloch, scepter'd king
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest Spirit
That fought in heav'n, now fiercer by despair,
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in strength, and rather than be less
Car'd not to be at all; with that care lost
Went all his fear: of God, or hell, or worse
He reck'd not, and these words thereafter spake:

My sentence is for open war; of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not; them let those
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms and longing wait
The signal to ascend, sit ling'ring here,
Heav'n's fugitives, and for their dwelling place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyranny who reigns
By our delay? No, let us rather choose,
Arm'd with hell flames and fury, all at once
O'er heav'n's high tow'rs to force resistless way,
Turning our Tort'rer into horrid arms
Against the torturer: when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine, he shall hear

Infernal thunder, and for lightning see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his Angels, and his throne itself
Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But perhaps
The way seems difficult and steep to scale
With upright wing, against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend
Up to our native seat: descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung o'er our broken rear
Insulting, and pursu'd us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy then;
Th' event is fear'd: should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction; if there be in hell
Fear to be worse destroy'd; what can be worse
Than to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss, condemn'd
In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
Where pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise us without hope of end
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge
Inexorably, and the tort'ring hour
Calls us to penance? More destroy'd than thus
We should be quite abolish'd and expire.
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
His utmost ire? which to the height enrag'd,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this essential, happier far
Than miserable to have eternal being:
Or if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing: and by proof, we feel
Our pow'r sufficient to disturb his heav'n,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,

Though inaccessible, his fatal throne :*

Which if not victory, is yet revenge.

He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd
Desp'rate revenge, and battle dangerous
To less than gods. On th' other side rose up
Belial, in act more graceful and humane ;
A fairer person lost not heav'n ; he seem'd
For dignity compos'd and high exploit :
But all was false and hollow ; though his tongue
Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels : for his thoughts were low ;
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Tim'rous and slothful : yet he pleas'd the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began.

I should be much for open war, O peers !
As not behind in hate ; if what was urg'd
Main reason to persuade immediate war,
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success :
When he who most excels in feats of arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels ;
Mistrustful grounds his courage on despair,
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what revenge ? the tow'rs of heav'n are fill'd
With armed watch, that renders all access
Impregnable ; oft on the bord'ring deep
Incamp their legions, or with obscure wing
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all hell should rise
With blackest insurrection, to confound
Heav'n's purest light, yet our great enemy,
All incorruptible, would on his throne
Sit unpolluted, and th' etherial mould
Incapable of stain would soon expel

Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire
Victorious. Thus repuls'd our final hope
Is flat despair; we must exasperate
Th' almighty victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us, that must be our cure.
To be no more; sad cure; for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night,
Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry foe
Can give it, or will ever? how he can,
Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure.
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
Belike through impotence, or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?
Say they who counsel war, we are decreed,
Reserv'd, and destin'd to eternal wo;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What! when we fled amain, pursu'd and struck
With heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought
The deep to shelter us? this hell then seem'd
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
Chain'd on the burning lake? that sure was worse
What if the breath, that kindled those grim fires,
Awak'd, should blow them into sevenfold rage,
And plunge us in the flames? or from above
Should intermitted vengeance, arm again
His red right hand to plague us? what if all
Her stores were open'd, and this firmament
Of hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
Impendent horrors, threat'ning hideous fall
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps
Designing or exhorting glorious war,

Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurl'd
Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
Of wracking whirlwinds, or forever sunk
Under yon boiling ocean wrapt in chains ;
There to converse with everlasting groans,
Unrespited, unpitied, unrepriev'd,
Ages of hopeless end ? this would be worse.
War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
My voice dissuades ; for what can force or guile
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
Views all things at one view ? he from heav'n's height
All these our motions vain, sees and derides ;
Not more almighty to resist our might
Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
Shall we then live thus vile, the race of heav'n
Thus trampled, thus expell'd to suffer here
Chains and these torments ? better these than worse,
By my advice ; since fate inevitable
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
The victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust
That so ordains : this was at first resolv'd,
If we were wise, against so great a foe
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
I laugh when those who at the spear are bold
And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink and fear
What yet they know must follow, to endure
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
The sentence of their conqu'ror : this is now
Our doom ; which if we can sustain and bear,
Our supreme foe in time may much remit
His anger, and perhaps thus far remov'd
Not mind us not offending, satisfy'd
With what is punish'd ; whence these raging fires
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome
Their noxious vapour, or innur'd not feel,
Or chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd
In temper and in nature, will receive

Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain,
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light ;
Besides what hope the never-ending flight
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more wo.

Thus Belial with words cloth'd in reason's garb,
Counsel'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth,
Not peace : and after him, thus Mammon spake .

Either to disenthroned the king of heav'n
We war, if war we best, or to regain
Our own right lost : him to unthroned we then
May hope, when everlasting fate shall yield
To fickle chance, and Chaos judge the strife ;
The former vain to hope argues as vain
The latter : for what place can be for us
Within heav'n's bound, unless heav'n's lord supreme
We overpower ? Suppose he should relent,
And publish grace to all, on promise made
Of new subjection ; with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence humble, and receive
Strict laws impos'd, to celebrate his throne
With warbled hymns, and to his godhead sing
Forc'd hallelujahs ; while he lordly sits
Our envied Sov'reign, and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odours, and ambrosial flow'rs,
Our servile off'rings ? This must be our task
In heav'n, this our delight ; how wearisome
Eternity so spent in worship paid
To whom we hate ! Let us not then pursue
By force impossible, by leave obtain'd,
Unacceptable, though in heav'n, our state
Of splendid vassalage ; but rather seek
Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
Free and to none accountable, preferring
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear

Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosp'rous of adverse
We can create, and in what place so'er
Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain
Through labour and endurance. This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark, doth heav'n's all-ruling Sire
Choose to reside, his glory unobscur'd,
And with the majesty of darkness round
Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar
Must'ring their rage, and heav'n resembles hell?
As he our darkness, cannot we his light
Imitate when we please? This desert soil
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can heav'n show more?
Our torments also may in length of time
Become our elements, these piercing fires
As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd
Into their temper; which must needs remove
The sensible of pain.* All things invite
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
Of order, how in safety best we may
Compose our present evils, with regard
Of what we are and were, dismissing quite
All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise.

He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd
Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain
The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long
Had rous'd the seas, now with hoarse cadence lull
Sea-faring men o'er-watch'd, whose bark by chance,
Or pinnace, anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest: such applause was heard
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleas'd,
Advising peace: for such another field
They dreaded worse than hell: so much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of Michael

* "The sensible of pain:" the sensibility or faculty of feeling.

Wrought still within them ; and no less desire
To found this nether empire, which might rise
By policy and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to heav'n.
Which when Beelzebub perceiv'd, than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
A pillar of state, deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat, and public care ;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic though in ruin : sage he stood,
With Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies ; his look
Drew audience and attention still as night,
Or summers noontide air, while thus he spake :
Thrones and Imperial Pow'rs, offspring of heav'n,
Ethereal Virtues ; or these titles now
Must we renounce, and changing style be call'd
Princes of hell ? for so the pop'lar vote
Inclines us, here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire ; doubtless, while we dream,
And know not that the King of heav'n hath doom'd
This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
From heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new league
Banded against his throne, but to remain
In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd
Under the inevitable curb, reserv'd
His captive multitude : for He, be sure,
In height or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
By our revolt, but over hell extend
His empire, and with iron sceptre rule
Us here, as with his golden those in heav'n.
What sit we then projecting peace and war ?
War hath determin'd us, and foil'd with loss
Irreparable ; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsaf'd or sought ; for what peace will be giv'n
To us enslav'd, but custody severe,

And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,
But to our pow'r hostility and hate,
Untam'd reluctance, and revenge though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the Conqu'ror least
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suff'ring feel?
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
With dang'rous expedition to invade
Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault or seige,
Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
Some easier enterprise? There is a place,
(If ancient and prophetic fame in heav'n
Err not) another world, the happy seat
Of some new race call'd Man, about this time
To be created like to us, though less
In pow'r and excellence, but favour'd more
Of him who rules above; so was his will
Pronounc'd among the gods, and by an oath,
That shook heav'n's whole circumference, confirm'd
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
What creatures there inhabit, of what mould,
Or substance; how indu'd, and what their pow'r,
And where their weakness, how attempted best,
By force or subtlety. Though heav'n be shut,
And heav'n's high Arbitrator sit secure
In his own strength, this place may lie expos'd;
The utmost border of his kingdom, left,
To their defence who hold it: here perhaps
Some advantageous act may be achiev'd
By sudden onset, either with hell fire
To waste his whole creation, or possess
All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
The puny inhabitants, or if not drive,
Seduce them to our party, that their God
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works. This would surpass
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
In our confusion, and our joy upraise

In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded bliss,
Faded so soon. Advise if this be worth
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here,
Hatching vain empires. Thus Beelzebub
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devis'd
By Satan, and in part propos'd: for whence,
But from the author of all ill, could spring
So deep a malice, to confound the race
Of mankind in one root, and earth with hell
To mingle and involve, done all to spite
The great Creator? But their spite still serves
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleas'd highly those infernal States, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes; with full assent
They vote; whereat his speech he thus renews.

Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate,
Synod of gods, and like to what ye are,
Great things resolv'd, which from the lowest deep,
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
Of those bright confines, whence with neighb'ring arms
And opportune excursion we may chance
Re-enter heav'n; or else in some mild zone
Dwell not unvisited of heav'n's fair light
Secure, and at the bright'ning orient beam
Purge off this gloom; the soft delicious air,
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
Shall breath her balm. But first whom shall we send
In search of this new world? whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wand'ring feet
The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way, to spread his airy flight
Upborne with indefatigable wings
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
The happy isle? what strength, what art can then
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe

Through the strict sentries and stations thick
Of angels watching round? Here he had need
All circumspection, and we now no less
Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send,
The weight of all, and our last hope relies.

This said, he sat; and expectation held
His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd
To second, or oppose, or undertake
The perilous attempt; but all sat mute,
Pond'ring the danger with deep thoughts; and each
In others' count'nance, read his own dismay
Astonish'd: none among the choice and prime
Of those heav'n-warring champions could be found
So hardy as to proffer or accept
Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last,
Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd
Above his fellows, with monarchical pride,
Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd, thus spake.

O progeny of heav'n, empyreal thrones,
With reason hath deep silence and demur
Seiz'd us, though undismay'd: long is the way
And hard, that out of hell leads up to light;
Our prison strong; this huge convex of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us round
Ninefold, the gates of burning adamant
Barr'd over to prohibit all egress.
These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound
Of unessential Night receives him next
Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being
Threatens him; plung'd in that abortive gulf,
If thence he 'scape, into whatever world,
Or unknown region, what remains him less
Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
But I should ill become this throne, O peers,
And this imperial sov'reignty adorn'd
With splendour, arm'd with pow'r if ought propos'd
And judg'd of public moment, in the shape
Of difficulty or danger, could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume

These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share
Of hazard as of honour, due alike
To him who reigns, and so much to him due
Of hazard more, as he above the rest
High honour'd sits? Go therefore, mighty pow'rs,
Terror of heav'n, though fall'n; intend at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render hell
More tolerable; if there be cure or charm
To respite or deceive, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch
Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad
Through all the coasts of dark destruction, seek
Deliverance for us all: this enterprise
None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose
The monarch, and prevented all reply,
Prudent lest from his resolution rais'd,
Others among the chief might offer now
(Certain to be refus'd) what erst they fear'd;
And so refus'd might in opinion stand
His rivals, winning cheap the high repute
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose;
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
With awful reverence prone; and as a God
Extol him equal to the Highest in heav'n:
Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd,
That for the general safety he despis'd
His own: for neither do the spirits damn'd
Lose all their virtue, lest bad men should boast
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,
Or close ambition varnish'd o'er with zeal.
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended, rejoicing in their matchless chief:
As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the north-wind sleeps, o'erspread

Heav'n's cheerful face, the louring element
Scowls o'er the darken'd landscape, snow or shower;
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
O shame to men ! Devil with Devil damn'd
Firm concord holds, men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heav'nly grace : and God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy :
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
That day and night for his destruction wait.

The Stygian council thus dissolved ; and forth
In order came the grand infernal peers :
Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd
Alone th' antagonist of heav'n, nor less
Than hell's dread emperor, with pomp supreme,
And godlike imitated state ; him round
A globe of fiery Seraphim enclos'd
With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.
Then of their session ended, they bid cry
With trumpet's regal sound, the great result :
Towards the four winds four speedy Cherubim
Put to their mouths the sounding alchymy
By heralds' voice explain'd ; the hollow abyss
Heard far and wide, and all the host of hell
With deaf'ning shout return'd them loud acclaim.
Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat rais'd
By false presumptuous hope, the ranged Powers
Disband, and wand'ring, each his several way
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
Leads him perplex'd, where he may likeliest find
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,

Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields;
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form.
As when to warn proud cities, war appears
Wag'd in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battle in the clouds, before each van
Prick forth the airy knights, and couch their spears
Till thickest legions close : with feats of arms
From either end of heav'n the welkin burns.
Others with vast Typhœan rage more fell
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind ; hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
As when Alcides, from Cæchalia crown'd
With conquest, felt th' envenom'd robe, and tore
Through pain, up by the roots Thessalian pines,
And Lichas from the top of Cæta threw
Into th' Euboic sea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds and hapless fall
By doom of battle ; and complain that fate
Free virtue should intral to force or chance.
Their song was partial, but the harmony
(What could it less when Spirits immortal sing ?)
Suspended hell, and took with ravishment
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet
(For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense,)
Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argued, then
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory, and shame,
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy :
Yet with a pleasing sorcery could charm
Pain for a while, or anguish, and excite

Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breast
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
Another part in squadrons and gross bands,
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful streams ;
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate ;
Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep ;
Cocytus nam'd, of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream : fierce Phlegethon,
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these a slow and silent stream,
Lethe the river of oblivion rolls
Her wat'ry labrinth, whereof who drinks,
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
Of ancient pile ; all else deep snow and ice :
A gulf profound as that Serbonion bog
Betwixt Damyata and mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk : the parching air
Burns froze, and cold performs th' effect of fire.
Thither by harpy footed furies haul'd
At certain revolutions all the damn'd
Are brought ; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
From beds of raging fire, to starve in ice
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round
Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire.
They ferry over this Lethean sound
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach

The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and wo,
All in one moment, and so near the brink;
But fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
The ford, and of itself the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
In confus'd march forlorn, th' advent'rous bands
With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast,
View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest : through many a dark and dreary vale
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp.
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of
death,

A universe of death, which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good,
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds
Perverse all monstrous all prodigious things,
Abominable, unutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeraeas dire.

Meanwhile the Adversary of God and Man,
Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of highest design,
Puts on swift wings, and tow'rd the gates of hell
Explores his solitary flight : sometimes
He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left,
Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
Up to the fiery concave, tow'ring high.
As when far off at sea a fleet descry'd
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs : they on the trading flood
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
Ply, stemming nightly tow'rd the pole. So seemed
Far off the flying Fiend : at last appear
Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid roof,

And thrice threefold the gates ; three folds were brass
Three iron, three of adamantine rock
Impenetrable, empal'd with circling fire,*
Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape ;
The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair,
But ended foul in many a scaly fold
Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd
With mortal sting : about her middle round
A cry of hell hounds never ceasing bark'd
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal ; yet when they list, would creep,
If ought disturb'd their noise into her womb,
And kennel there, yet there still bark'd and howl'd
Within, unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these
Vex'd Scylla bathing in the sea that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore :
Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when call'd
In secret ; riding through the air she comes,
Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring moon
Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,
If shape it might be call'd, that shape had none
Distinguishable, in member, joint, or limb ;
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd
For each seem'd either ; black it stood as Night,
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as hell,
And shook a dreadful dart ; what seem'd his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
The monster moving onward, came as fast
With horrid strides, hell trembled as he strode.
Th' undaunted Fiend what this might be admir'd,
Admir'd, not fear'd : God and his Son except,
Created thing naught valu'd he nor shunn'd ;
And with disdainful look thus first began :
Whence and what art thou, execrable shape !

* "Empal'd with circling fire ;" paled or hedged in.

That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
Thy miscreated front athwart my way
To yonder gates? Through them I mean to pass,
That be assur'd, without leave ask'd of thee;
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
Hell-born, not to contend with spirits of heav'n.

To whom the goblin full of wrath reply'd:
Art thou that traitor Angel, art thou he
Who first broke peace in heav'n, and faith till then
Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms
Drew after him the third part of heav'n's sons
Conjur'd against the Highest, for which both thou
And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd
To waste eternal days in wo and pain?
And reckon'st thou thyself with spirits of heav'n,
Hell-doom'd, and breath'st defiance here, and scorn
Where I reign king, and to enrage thee more,
Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings,
Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
Thy ling'ring, or with one stroke of this dart
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before.

So spake the grisly terror, and in shape,
So speaking and so threat'ning, grew tenfold
More dreadful and deform: on th' other side
Incens'd with indignation, Satan stood
Unterrify'd, and like a comet burn'd,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
Levell'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands
No second stroke intend, and such a frown
Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds
With heav'n's artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian, then stand front to front
Hovering a space, till winds, the signal blow
To join their dark encounter in mid air:
So frown'd the mighty combatants, that hell
Grew darker at their frown, so match'd they stood;

For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a foe : and now great deeds
Had been achiev'd, whereof all hell had rung,
Had not the snaky sorceress that sat
Fast by hell gate, and kept the fatal key,
Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

O Father, what intends thy hand, she cry'd,
Against thy only son ? What fury, O Son,
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
Against thy Father's head ? and know'st for whom ?
For him who sits above and laughs the while
At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids :
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.

She spake, and at her words the hellish pest
Forbore ; then these, to her, Satan return'd :

So strange thy outcry, and thy words, so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends ; till first I know of thee,
What thing thou art, thus double form'd and why
In this infernal vale first met thou call'st
Me Father, and that phantasm call'st my son ;
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him and thee.

T' whom thus the port'ress of hell gate reply'd :
Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul ? once deem'd so fair
In heav'n, when at th' assembly, and in sight
Of all the Seraphim with thee combin'd
In bold conspiracy 'gainst heav'n's King,
All on a sudden, miserable pain
Surpriz'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth, till on the left side opening wide,
Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
Then shining heav'nly fair, a goddess arm'd
Out of thy head I sprung ; amazement seiz'd
All th' host of heav'n ; back they recoil'd afraid

At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a sign
Portentous held me ; but familiar grown,
I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
The most averse ; thee chiefly, who full oft
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,
Becam'st enamour'd, and such joy thou took'st
With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose
And fields were fought in heav'n ; wherein remain'd
(For what could else ?) to our almighty foe
Clear victory, to our part loss and rout
Through all the empyrean : down they fell
Into this deep, and in the gen'ral fall
I also ; at which time this pow'ful key
Driv'n headlong from the pitch of Heav'n, down
Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
Without my opening. Pensive here I sat
Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,
Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes.
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest
'Thine own begotton, breaking violent way,
Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
Transform'd : but he my inbred enemy
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart
Made to destroy : I fled, and cry'd out Death !
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back resounded Death !
I fled, but he pursued, (though more, it seems,
Inflam'd with lust than rage) and swifter far,
Me overtook his mother all dismay'd,
And in embraces forcible and foul
Engend'ring with me, of that rape begot
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
Surround me as thou saw'st, hourly conceiv'd
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me ; for when they list, into the womb

That bred them, they return, and howl and gnaw
My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth
Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
That rest or intermission none I find.

Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death my son and foe, who sets them on,
And me his parent would full soon devour
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involv'd; and knows that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounc'd
But thou, O Father, I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
Though temper'd heav'nly, for that mortal dint,
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish'd, and the subtle Fiend his lore
Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth:
Dear daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy sire,
And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
Of dalliance had with thee in heav'n, and joys
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
Befall'n us unforeseen, unthought of; know
I come no enemy, but to set free
From out this dark and dismal house of pain
Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly host
Of spirits, that in our just pretences arm'd,
Fell with us from on high: from them I go
This uncouth errand sole, and one for all
Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
Th' unfounded deep, and through the void immense
To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold
Should be, and by concurring signs, ere now
Created vast and round, a place of bliss
In the purlieu of heav'n, and therein plac'd
A race of upstart creatures, to supply
Perhaps our vacant room, though more remov'd
Lest heav'n surcharg'd with potent multitude
Might hap to move new broils; be this or aught

Than this more secret now design'd, I haste
To know, and this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place where Thou and Death
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom air,* embalm'd
With odours; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.

He ceas'd, for both seem'd highly pleas'd, and Death
Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
His famine should be fill'd, and bless'd his maw
Destin'd to that good hour: no less rejoic'd
His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire.

The key of this infernal pit by due
And by command of Heav'n's all-pow'rful King
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
These adamant gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might.
But what owe I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath thither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office here confin'd,
Inhabitant of heav'n, and heav'nly born,
Here in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrors and with clamours compass'd round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed;
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gav'st me; whom should I obey
But thee, whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling without end.

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our wo, she took;
And tow'rd's the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew,

* Buxom air :'' yielding.

Which but herself, not all the Stygian Powr's
Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole turns
Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
Unfastens: on a sudden, open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
Excell'd her pow'r; the gate's wide open stood,
That with extended wings a banner'd host
Under spread ensigns marching might pass through
With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
So wide they stood and like a furnace mouth
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame,
Before their eyes in sudden view appear
The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height,
And time and place are lost; where eldest Night
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
For hot, cold, moist or dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for mast'ry, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms; they round the flag
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light arm'd, or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
He rules a moment; Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray
By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss
The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd

Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
Unless th' almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more worlds ;
Into this wild abyss the wary Fiend
Stood on the brink of hell and look'd awhile,
Pond'ring his voyage ; for no narrow frith
He had to cross. Nor was his ear less peal'd
With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,
With all her battering engines bent to raze
Some capital city ; or less than if this frame
Of heav'n were falling, and these elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn
The steadfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans
He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
Uplifted spurns the ground ; thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides
Audacious ; but that seat soon failing, meets
A vast vacuity : all unawares
Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb down he drops
Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
As many miles aloft ; that fury stay'd,
Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,
Nor good dry land ; nigh founder'd on he fares,
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half flying ; behoves him now both oar and sail.
As when a griphon through the wilderness
With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimaspan, who by stealth
Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
The guarded gold : so eagerly the Fiend
O'er bog, or steep, thro' strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies :
At length a universal hubbub wild
Of stunning sounds and voices all confus'd,

Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence: thither he plies,
Undaunted to meet there whatever Pow'r
Or Spirit of the nethermost abyss
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
Bord'ring on light; when straight behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread
Wide on the wasteful deep; with him enthron'd
Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign; and by them stood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon; Rumour next and Chance,
And Tumult and Confusion all embroil'd,
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

T' whom Satan turning boldly, thus: ye Pow'rs
And Spirits of this nethermost abyss,
Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy,
With purpose to explore or to disturb
The secrets of your realm, but by constraint
Wand'ring this darksome desert, as my way
Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
Alone, and without guide, half lost I seek
What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
Confine with heav'n; or if some other place,
From your dominion won, th' ethereal king
Possesses lately, thither to arrive
I travel this profound: direct my course;
Directed no mean recompence it brings
To your behoof, if I that region lost,
All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce
To her original darkness and your sway
(Which is my present journey) and once more
Erect the standard there of ancient Night;
Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge.

Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,
With falt'ring speech and visage incompos'd,
Answer'd; I know thee, stranger, who thou art,
That mighty leading Angel, who of late

Made head against heav'n's King, though overthrown
I saw and heard, for such a num'rous host
Fled not in silence through the frighted deep
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded : and heav'n's gates
Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
Keep residence, if all I can will serve
That little which is left so to defend,
Encroach'd on still through your intestine broils
Weak'ning the sceptre of old Night : first hell
Your dungeon stretching far and wide beneath ;
Now lately heav'n and earth another world,
Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain
To that side heav'n from whence your legions fell
If that way be your walk, you have not far ;
So much the nearer danger ; go and speed ;
Havoc and spoil and ruin are my gain.

He ceas'd ; and Satan stay'd not to reply,
But glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity and force renew'd
Springs upward like a pyramid of fire
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environ'd wins his way : harder beset
And more endanger'd, that when Argo pass'd
Through Bosphorus betwixt the justling rocks .
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd
Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steer'd.
So he with difficulty and labour hard
Moved on, with difficulty and labour he ;
But he once past, soon after when man fell,
Strange alteration ! Sin and Death amain
Following his track, such was the will of heav'n
Pav'd after him a broad and beaten way
Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endur'd a bridge of wond'rous length
From hell continu'd reaching th' utmost orb
Of this frail world ; by which the spirits perverse

With easy intercourse pass to and fro
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good angels guard by special grace.
But now at last the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the walls of heav'n
Shoots far into the bosom of dim night
A glimmering dawn; here Nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire
As from her outmost works a broken foe
With tumult less, and with less hostile din,
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
And like a weather-beaten vessel holds
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn :
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off th' empyreal heav'n, extended wide
In circuit, undetermin'd square or round,
With opal tow'rs and battlements adorn'd
Of living sapphire, once his native seat ;
And fast by, hanging in a golden chain
This pendent world, in bigness as a star
Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.
Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge
Accurs'd, and in a cursed hour he hies.

THE END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

THE
THIRD BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

GOD sitting on his throne sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created ; shows him to the Son who sat at his right hand ; foretells the success of Satan in perverting mankind ; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created Man free and able enough to have withstood his tempter ; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards Man ; but God again declares, that grace cannot be extended towards Man without the satisfaction of divine justice ; Man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to godhead, and, therefore, with all his progeny devoted to death must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for Man : the Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in Heaven and Earth ; commands all the Angels to adore him ; they obey, and hymning to their harps in full choir, celebrate the Father and the Son. Meanwhile Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb ; where wandering, he first finds a place, since called the Limbo of Vanity ; what persons and things fly up thither ; thence comes to the gate of Heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it ; his passage thence to the orb of the sun ; he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner Angel ; and pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation and Man whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed : alights first on mount Niphates.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK III.

HAIL holy Light, offspring of heav'n, first-born,
Or of th' Eternal co-eternal beam;
May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,
And never but in unapproach'd light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
Or hear'st thou rather pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? before the sun,
Before the heav'ns thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite.
Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
Escap'd the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight
Through utter and through middle darkness borne
With other notes than to th' Orphean lyre
I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,
Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to re-ascend,
Though hard and rare; thee I revisit safe,
And feel thy sov'reign vital lamp; but thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,
Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more

Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
Thee Sion, and the flow'ry brooks beneath,
'That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow
Nightly I visit; nor sometimes forget
Those other two equall'd with me in fate,
So were I equall'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyras and blind Mæonides,
And Tiresias and Phineus prophets old:
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid,
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works, to me expung'd and raz'd,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her pow'rs
Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

Now had th' almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyrean where he sits
High throned above all height, bent down his eye,
His own works and their works at once to view;
About him all the Sanctities of heav'n
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd
Beatitude past utterance; on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son; on earth he first beheld
Our two first parents, yet the only two

Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love
In blissful solitude; he then survey'd
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
Coasting the wall of heav'n on this side Night
In the dun air sublime, and ready now
To stoop with wearied wings and willing feet
On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd
Firm land imbosom'd, without firmament,
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
Him God beholding from his prospect high,
Wherein past, present, future he beholds,
Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake :

Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage
Transports our Adversary? whom no bounds
Prescrib'd, no bars of hell, nor all the chains
Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss
Wide interrupt can hold; so bent he seems
On desperate revenge, that shall redound
Upon his own rebellious head. And now
Through all restraint broke loose he wings his way
Not far off heav'n, in the precincts of light,
Directly tow'rd the new created world,
And man there plac'd, with purpose to assay
If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert,
For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
And easily transgress the sole command,
Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall,
He and his faithless progeny: Whose fault?
Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
All he could have; I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
Such I created all th' ethereal pow'rs
And spirits, both them who stood, and them who fail'd
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell
Not free, what proof could they have giv'n sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,

Where only what they needs must do appear'd,
Not what they would ? what praise could they receive ?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
When will and reason (reason also is choice)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
Made passive both, had serv'd necessity,
Not me ? They therefore as to right belong'd,
So were created, nor can justly accuse
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
As if predestination overrul'd
Their will, dispos'd by absolute decree
Or high foreknowledge ; they themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I ; if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.
So without least impulse or shadow of fate
Or ought by me immutably foreseen,
They trespass, authors to themselves in all
Both what they judge and what they choose ; for so
I form'd them free, and free they must remain,
Till they inthral themselves ; I else must change
Their nature, and revoke the high decree
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
Their freedom, they themselves ordain'd their fall,
The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
Self-tempted, self-deprav'd : Man falls, deceiv'd
By th' other first : Man therefore shall find grace,
The other none : in mercy and justice both,
Through heav'n and earth, so shall my glory excel :
But mercy first and last shall brightest shine.

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
All heav'n, and in the bless'd Spirits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd :
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious ; in him all his Father shone
Substantially express'd, and in his face
Divine compassion visibly appear'd,
Love without end and without measure grace,
Which uttering thus he to his Father spake :

O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd
Thy sov'reign sentence, that Man should find grace ;
For which both heav'n and earth shall high extol
Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
Encompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.
For should Man finally be lost, should Man,
Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
With his own folly ? that be from thee far,
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
Of all things made, and judgest only right.
Or shall the Adversary thus obtain
His end, and frustrate thine ? shall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught,
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to hell
Draw after him the whole race of mankind
By him corrupted ? or wilt thou thyself
Abolish thy creation, and unmake
For him what for thy glory thou hast made ?
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
Be question'd, and blasphem'd without defence.

To whom the great Creator thus reply'd :
O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,
All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
As my eternal purpose hath decreed :
Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will,
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
Freely vouchsaf'd ; once more I will renew
His lapsed pow'rs, though forfeit, and intrall'd
By sin, to foul exorbitant desires ;
Upheld by me yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe,
By me upheld, that he may know how frail
His fall'n condition is, and to me owe
All his deliverance ; and to none but me.

Some I have chosen of peculiar grace
Elect above the rest ; so is my will :
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th' incens'd Deity, while offer'd grace
Invites ; for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.
To pray'r, repentance, and obed'ence due,
Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
And I will place within them as a guide
My umpire, conscience, whom if they will hear,
Light after light well us'd they shall attain,
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
This my long sufferance and my day of grace
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste ;
But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more,
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall ;
And none but such from mercy I exclude.
But yet all is not done ; Man disobeying,
Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of heaven,
Affecting godhead, and so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath naught left,
But to destruction sacred and devote,
He with his whole posterity must die,
Die he, or justice must ; unless for him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
Say heav'nly Pow'rs where shall we find such love ?
Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
Ian's mortal crime, and just th' unjust to save ?
Dwell's in all heaven charity so dear ?
He ask'd, but all the heav'nly choir stood mute,
And silence was in heav'n ; on man's behalf
Patron or intercessor none appear'd,
Much less that durst upon his own head draw
The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.

And now without redemption all mankind
Must have been lost, adjudg'd to Death and hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,
His dearest mediation thus renew'd.
Father thy word is past, man shall find grace ;
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all
Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought ?
Happy for man, so coming ; he her aid
Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost ;
Atonement for himself or offering meet ;
Indebted and undone, hath none to bring ;
Behold me then ; me for him, life for life
I offer ; on me let thine anger fall ;
Account me Man ; I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly die
Well pleased ; on me let Death wreck all his rage •
Under his gloomy pow'r I shall not long
Lie vanquish'd ; thou hast giv'n me to possess
Life in myself for ever ; by thee I live,
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due
All that of me can die ; yet that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell ;
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil ;
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
I through the ample air in triumph high
Shall lead hell captive, maugre hell, and show
The Pow'rs of darkness bound. Thou at the sight
Pleas'd out of heaven shall look down and smile,
While by thee rais'd I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave •
Then with the multitude of my redeem'd

Shall enter heav'n long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd
And reconcilment ; wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.

His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience : as a sacrifice
Glad to be offer'd he attends the will
Of his great Father. Admiration seiz'd
All heav'n, what this might mean, and whither tend
Wond'ring : but soon th' Almighty thus reply'd

O thou in heav'n and earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath, O thou
My sole complacence ! well thou know'st how dear
To me are all thy works, nor man the least,
Though last created ; that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save
By losing thee awhile, the whole race lost.
Thou therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
Their nature also to thy nature join ;
And be thyself man among men on earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,
By wond'rous birth : be thou in Adam's room
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee,
As from a second root, shall be restor'd
As many as are restor'd, without thee none.
His crime makes guilty all his sons ; thy merit
Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for man, be judg'd and die,
And dying rise, and rising with him raise
His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life
So heav'nly love shall outdo helish hate,
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,

So dearly to redeem what hellish hate
So easily destroy'd and still destroys
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own,
Because thou hast, though thron'd in highest bliss
Equal to God, and equally enjoying
Godlike fruition, quitted all, to save
A world from utter loss, and hast been found
By merit more than birthright Son of God,
Found worthiest to be so by being good,
Far more than great or high : because in thee
Love hath abounded more than glory abounds,
Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy manhood also to this throne ;
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign
Both God and man, Son both of God and man,
Anointed universal King : all power
I give thee ; reign for ever, and assume
Thy merits : under thee as head supreme,
Thrones, Princedoms, Pow'rs, Dominions I reduce :
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
In heav'n, or earth, or under earth in hell.
When thou attended gloriously from heav'n
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
Thy summoning Arch-Angels to proclaim
Thy dread tribunal ; forthwith from all winds
The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all past ages, to the general doom
Shall hasten, such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
Then all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge
Bad men and Angels : they arraign'd shall sink
Beneath thy sentence ; hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New heav'n and earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
And after all their tribulations long
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.

Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,
For regal sceptre then no more shall need,
God shall be all in all. But all ye gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this dies !
Adore the Son, and honour him as me.
No sooner had th' Almighty ceas'd, but all
The multitude of Angels with a shout
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices uttering joy, heav'n rung
With jubilee, and loud hosannas fill'd
Th' eternal regions : lowly reverent
Tow'rd's either throne they bow, and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast
Their crowns inwove with amaranth and gold ;
Immortal amaranth, a flow'r which once
In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,
Began to bloom ; but soon for Man's offence
To heav'n remov'd, where first it grew, there grows,
And flow'rs aloft shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliss through midst of heav'n
Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream ;
With these that never fade, the Spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams,
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
Impurpled with celestial roses smil'd.
Then crowned again, their golden harps they took,
Harps ever tun'd, that glittering by their side
Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
Of charming symphony they introduce
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high ;
No voice exempt, no voice but well could join
Melodious part, such concord is in heav'n.

Thee, Father, first they sung Omnipotent,
Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
Eternal King ; the Author of all being,
Fountain of light, thyself invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit'st
Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st

The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear,
Yet dazzle heav'n that brightest seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
Thee next they sang of all creation first,
Begotten Son, divine similitude,
In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud
Made visible, th' Almighty Father shines,
Whom else no creature can behold ; on thee
Impress'd th' effulgence of his glory abides,
Transfus'd on thee his ample spirit rests.
He heav'n of heav'ns and all the pow'rs therein
By thee created, and by thee threw down
Th' aspiring dominations : thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot wheels that shook
Heav'ns everlasting frame while o'er the necks
Thou drov'st of warring angels disarray'd.
Back from pursuit thy pow'rs with loud acclaim
Thee only extoll'd Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,
Not so on man : him through their malice fall'n,
Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity incline :
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd,
He to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
Second to thee, offer'd himself to die
For man's offence. O unexampled love,
Love no where to be found less than divine !
Hail Son of God, Saviour of men thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my song
Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.
Thus they in heav'n, above the starry sphere,

Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
Meanwhile upon the firm opacous globe
Of this round world, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferior orbs enclos'd
From Chaos and th' inroad of Darkness old,
Satan alighted walks : a globe far off
It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent ;
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night,
Starless expos'd, and ever-threat'ning storms
Of Chaos blust'ring round, inclement sky,
Save on that side which from the wall of heav'n,
Though distant far, some small reflection gains
Of glimm'ring air, less vex'd with tempest loud ;
Here walk'd the fiend at large in spacious field.
As when a vulture on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey
To gorge the flesh of lambs, or yeanling kids,
On hills where flocks are fed, flies tow'rd the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams ;
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chinesus drive
With sails and wind their cany wagons light :
So on this windy sea of land, the fiend
Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey ;
Alone, for other creature in this place
Living or lifeless to be found was none ;
None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
Up hither like aerial vapours flew
Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
With vanity had fill'd the works of men ;
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
Or happiness in this or th' other life :
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
Naught seeking but the praise of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds ;
All th' unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand,

Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd
Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final dissolution, wander here,
Not in the neighb'ring moon, as some have dream'd
Those argent fields more likely habitants,
Translated saints, or middle spirits hold
Betwixt th' angelical and human kind.
Hither of ill-join'd sons and daughters born
First from the ancient world those giants came
With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd
The builders next of Babel on the plain
Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build :
Others came single ; he who to be deem'd
A God, leap'd fondly into Ætna flames,
Empedocles ; and he who to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
Cleombrotus : and many more too long,
Embryos and idiots, eremites and friars,
White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery.
Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in heaven ;
And they who to be sure of Paradise
Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis'd ;
They pass the planets sev'n, and pass the fix'd,
And that crystalline sphere* whose balance weighs
The trepidation talk'd, and that first mov'd :
And now saint Peter at heav'n's wicket seems
To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
Of heav'n's ascent they lift their feet, when lo
A violent cross wind from either coast
Blows them transverse ten thousand leagues awry
Into the devious air ; then might ye see

* " And that crystalline sphere," &c. an allusion to the Ptolemaic notion of a *trepidation* or *libration* in the crystalline heaven, caused by the *primum mobile*, or first-moved and first mover.

Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers tost
And flutter'd into rags, then reliques, beads,
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
The sport of winds: all these upwhirl'd aloft
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off
Into a limbo large and broad, since call'd
The paradise of fools, to few unknown
Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod.
All this dark globe the fiend found as he pass'd,
And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam
Of dawning light turn'd thither-ward in haste
His travell'd steps; far distant he descries
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of heav'n, a structure high;
At top whereof, but far more rich appear'd
The work as of a kingly palace gate,
With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Embellish'd: thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on earth
By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz
Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cry'd, This is the gate of heav'n.
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to heav'n sometimes
Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth, sailing arriv'd
Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss:
Direct against which open'd from beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to th' earth, a passage wide,

Wider by far than that of after times
Over mount Sion ; and, though that were large,
Over the promis'd land, to God so dear,
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
On high behests his angels to and fro
Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard,
From Paneas the fount of Jordan's flood
To Beersheba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Egypt, and the Arabian shore :
So wide the op'ning seem'd, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence, now on the lower stair
That scal'd by steps of gold to heaven gate,
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a scout
Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen, or some renown'd metropolis
With glist'ring spires and pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams ;
Such wonder seiz'd, though after heaven seen,
The spirit malign, but much more envy seiz'd,
At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
Round he surveys (and well might, where he stood
So high above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade) from eastern point
Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond th' horizon ; then from pole to pole
He views in breadth, and without longer pause
Downright into the world's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air, his oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds ;
Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,

Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,
Thrice happy isles, but who dwelt happy there
He stay'd not to inquire : above them all
The golden sun in splendour likest heav'n
Allur'd his eye ; thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament (but up or down,
By centre, or eccentric, hard to tell,
Or longitude,) where the great luminary
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses light from far ; they as they move
Their starry dance in numbers that compute
Days, months, and years, tow'rd his all-cheering
lamp

Turns swift their various motions, or are turn'd
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
The universe, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen,
Shoots invisible virtue ev'n to the deep ;
So wondrously was set his station bright.
There lands the fiend, a spot like which perhaps
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never saw.
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compar'd with aught on earth, metal of stone ;
Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire ;
If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear ;
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides
Imagin'd rather oft than elsewhere seen,
That stone, or like to that which here below
Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
In vain, though by their pow'rful art they bind
Volatile hermes, and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
Drain'd through a limbec to his native form.

What wonder then if fields and regions here
Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch
Th' arch-chemic sun, so far from us remote,
Produces, with terrestrial humour mix'd,
Here in the dark so many precious things
Of colour glorious, and effect so rare ?
Here matter new to gaze the Devil met
Undazzled ; far and wide his eye commands ;
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
But all sunshine, as when his beams at noon
Culminate from th' equator, as they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body opaque can fall ; and th' air
No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray
To objects distant far, whereby he soon
Saw within ken a glorious angel stand,
The same whom John saw also in the sun :
His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid ;
Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar
Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
Illustrious on his shoulders fledge with wings
Lay waving round ; on some great charge employ'd
He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope
To find who might direct his wandering flight
To Paradise the happy seat of man,
His journey's end and our beginning wo,
But first he casts to change his proper shape,
Which else might work him danger or delay ;
And now a stripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smil'd celestial, and to every limb
Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd :
Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek play'd ; wings he wore
Of many a colour'd plume sprinkled with gold,
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand.

He drew not nigh unheard ; the angel bright,
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
Admonish'd by his ear, and straight was known
Th' arch-angel Uriel, one of the seven
Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
Stand ready at command, and ere his eyes
That run through all the heav'n's, or down to th' earth
Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land : him Satan thus accosts :

Uriel, for thou of those seven spirits that stand
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
The first art wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest heav'n, to bring,
Where all his sons thy embassy attend ;
And here art likeliest by supreme decree
Like honour to obtain, and as his eye
To visit oft this new creation round ;
Unspeakable desire to see, and know
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly man
His chief delight, and favour, him for whom
All these this work so wondrous he ordain'd,
Hath brought me from the choirs of cherubim
Alone thus wand'ring. Brightest seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath man
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell
That I may find him, and with secret gaze
Or open admiration him behold,
On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd
That both in him and all things, as is meet
The universal Maker we may praise ;
Who justly hath driv'n out his rebel foes
To deepest hell, and to repair that loss
Created this new happy race of men
To serve him better : wise are all his ways
So spake the false dissembler unperceiv'd
For neither man nor angel can discern
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks

Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through heav'n and earth:
And oft though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
At Wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems: which now for once beguil'd
Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held
The sharpest sighted spirit of all in heav'n;
Who to the fraudulent impostor foul,
In his uprightness answer thus return'd:

Fair angel, thy desire which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify
The great Work-master, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps
Contented with report hear only in heav'n:
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight;
But what created mind can comprehend
Their number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
I saw when at his word the formless mass,
This world's material mould, came to a heap:
Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar
Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd
Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:
Swift to their several quarters hasted then
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire;
And this ethereal quintessence of heav'n
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each his course;
The rest in circuit walls this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side

With light from hence, though but reflected, shines.
That place is earth, the seat of man, that light
His day, which else as th' other hemisphere
Night would invade : but there the neighb'ring moon
(So call that opposite fair star) her aid
Timely interposes, and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid heav'n,
With borrow'd light her countenance triform
Hence fills and empties to enlighten th' earth,
And in her pale dominion checks the night.
That spot to which I point, is Paradise,
Adam's abode, those lofty shades his bower.
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires.

Thus said, he turn'd ; and Satan bowing low,
As to superior spirits is wont in heav'n,
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave, and tow'rd the coast of earth beneath,
Down from th' ecliptic, sped with hop'd success,
Throws his steep flight in many an airy wheel,
Nor stay'd till on Niphates top he lights.

END OF BOOK III.

THE
FOURTH BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

SATAN now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprise which he undertook alone against God and man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions; fear, envy, and despair: but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise whose outward prospect and situation is described, overleaps the bounds, sits in the shape of a cormorant on the tree of life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse, thence gathers that the tree of knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation, by seducing them to transgress: then leaves them awhile, to know further of their state by some other means. Meanwhile Uriel descending on a sunbeam warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escaped the deep, and passed at noon by his sphere in the shape of a good angel down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: their bower described; their evening worship. Gabriel drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping: there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers, prepares resistance, but hindered by a sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradise.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IV.

O FOR that warning voice, which he who saw
Th' Apocalypse heard cry in heav'n aloud,
Then when the dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be reveng'd on men,
Wo to the inhabitants on earth! that now,
While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
The coming of their secret foe, and 'scap'd,
Haply so 'scap'd his mortal snare: for now
Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,
The tempter ere th' accuser of mankind,
To wreck on innocent frail man his loss
Of that first battle, and his flight to hell;
Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth
Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
And like a devilish engine back recoils
Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
The hell within him; for within him hell
He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
One step no more than from himself can fly
By change of place: now conscience wakes despair
That slumber'd, wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be
Worse; of worse deeds worse suff'rings must ensue.

Sometimes tow'rd's Eden, which now in his view
Lay pleasant, his griev'd look he fixes sad ;
Sometimes tow'rd's heav'n and the full-blazing sun,
Which now sat high in his meridian tower :
Then much revolving, thus in sighs began :

O thou that with surpassing glory crown'd,
Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
Of this new world ; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminish'd heads ; to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name
O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere ;
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down
Warring in heav'n against heav'n's matchless King :
Ah wherefore ! he deserv'd no such return
From me, whom he created what I was
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none ; nor was his service hard.
What could be less than to afford him praise,
The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
How due ! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
And wrought but malice ; lifted up so high
I 'sdain'd subjection ; and thought one step higher
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burdensome still paying, still to owe,
Forgetful what from him I still receiv'd,
And understood not that a grateful mind
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharg'd ; what burden then ?
I had his pow'rful destiny ordain'd
Ie some inferior angel, I had stood
Then happy ; no unbounded hope had rais'd
Ambition. Yet why not ? some other power
As great might have aspir'd, and me, though mean,
Drawn to his part ; but other pow'rs as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within,
Or from without, to all temptations arm'd.

Hadst thou the same free will and pow'r to stard?
Thou hadst : whom hast thou then or what t' accuse,
But heav'n's free love dealt equally to all?
Be then his love accurs'd, since love or hate
To me alike, it deals eternal wo.
Nay curs'd be thou ; since against his, thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
Me miserable ! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair ?
Which way I fly is hell : myself am hell :
And in the lowest deep, a lower deep
Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,
To which the hell I suffer seems a heav'n.
O then at last relent : is there no place
Left for repentance, none for pardon left ?
None left but by submission ; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
Among the spirits beneath, whom I seduc'd
With other promises and other vaunts
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
Th' Omnipotent. Ay me ! they little know
How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
Under what torments inwardly I groan,
While they adore me on the throne of hell.
With diadem and sceptre high advanc'd,
The lower still I fall, only supreme
In misery ; such joy, ambition finds.
But say I could repent, and could obtain
By act of grace my former state : how soon
Would height recal high thoughts, how soon unsay
What feign'd submission swore ? ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent and void :
or never can true reconcilment grow
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep :
Which would but lead me to a worse relapse
And heavier fall : so should I purchase dear
Short intermission, bought with double smart.
This knows my punisher : therefore as far
From granting he, as I from begging peace :

All hope excluded thus, behold instead
Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight
Mankind created, and for him this world.
So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,
Farewell remorse : all good to me is lost
Evil be thou my good ; by thee at least
Divided empire with heav'n's King I hold,
By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign ;
As man ere long, and this new world shall know.

Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face.
Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envy, and despair ;
Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld ;
For heav'nly minds from such distempers foul
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calm,
Artificer of fraud ; and was the first
That practis'd falsehood under saintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge ;
Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive
Uriel once warn'd ; whose eye pursu'd him down
The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount
Saw him disfigur'd more than could befall
Spirit of happy sort ; his gestures fierce
He mark'd, and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen.
So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champaign head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access deny'd : and over head up grew
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene, and as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verd'rous wall of Paradise up sprung :

Which to our general sire gave prospect large
Into his nether empire neighb'ring round.
And higher than that wall, a circling row
Of goodliest trees loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
Appear'd, with gay enammel'd colours mix'd :
On which the sun more glad impress'd his beams
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
When God hath show'r'd the earth ; so lovely seem'd
That landscape : And of pure, now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness but despair : now gentle gales
Fanning their odoriferous wings dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
Sabeian odours from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blest, with such delay
Well pleased they slack their course, and many a
league

Cheer'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles :
So entertain'd these odorous sweets the fiend
Who came their bane, though with them better pleas'd
Than Asmodeus with the fishy fume
That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse
Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent
From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.

Now to th' ascent of that steep savage hill,
Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow ;
But further way found none, so thick entwin'd,
As one continued brake, the undergrowth
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
All path of man or beast that pass'd that way :
One gate there only was, and that look'd east
On th' other side : which when th' arch-felon saw,
Due entrance he disdain'd, and in contempt,
At one slight bound high overleap'd all bound :

Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve,
In hurdled cotes, amid the field secure,
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold :
Or as a thief bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault,
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles :
So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold ;
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,
The middle tree, and highest there that grew,
Sat like a cormorant ; yet not true life
Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
To them who liv'd ; nor on the virtue thought
Of that life giving plant, but only us'd
For prospect, what well us'd, had been the pledge
Of immortality. So little knows
Any but God alone, to value right
The good before him, but perverts best things
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
Beneath him with new wonder now he views
To all delight of human sense expos'd,
In narrow room Nature's whole wealth, yea more,
A heav'n on earth : for blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in th' east
Of Eden planted ; Eden stretch'd her line
From Auran eastward to the royal towers
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
Or where the sons of Eden long before
Dwelt in Telassar : in this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd ;
Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste ;
And all amid them stood the tree of life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold ; and next to life.

Our death, the tree of knowledge grew fast by,
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill
Pass'd underneath ingulf'd ; for God had thrown
That mountain as his garden mould high rais'd
Upon the rapid current, which through veins
Of porous earth, with kindly thirst up drawn,
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Water'd the garden ; thence united fell
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
Which from his darksome passage now appears,
And now divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wand'ring many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account ;
But rather to tell how, if art could tell,
How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendent shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flow'rs, worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade
Imbrown'd the noon-tide bow'rs : thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view ;
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and
 balm ;
Others whose fruit burnish'd with golden rind
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,
If true, here only, and of delicious taste :
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interpos'd,
Or palmy hillock ; or the flow'ry lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store,
Flow'rs of all hue, and without thorn the rose :
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine

Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant ; meanwhile murm'ring waters fall
Down the slope hills dispers'd, or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their choir apply : airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
Led on th' eternal spring. Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flow'r by gloomy Dis
Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world ; nor that sweet grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
Of Eden strive ; nor that Nyseian isle
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Lybian Jove,
Hid Amalthea and her florid son
Young Bacchus from his step-dame Rhea's eye ;
Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard,
Mount Amara, though this by some suppos'd
True Paradise under the Ethiop line
By Nilus' head, enclos'd with shining rock,
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
From this Assyrian garden, where the fiend
Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
Of living creatures new to sight and strange :
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honour clad
In naked majesty, seem'd lords of all,
And worthy seem'd : for in their looks divine,
The image of their glorious Maker, shone
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
(Severe but in true filial freedom plac'd)
Whence true authority and men ; though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd :
For contemplation he, and valour form'd ;

For softness she, and sweet attractive grace ;
He for God only, she for God in him :
His fair large front and eye sublime declar'd
Absolute rule ; and hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clust'ring, but not beneath his shoulders broad :
She as a veil down to the slender waist
Her unadorned golden tresses wore
Dishevel'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd
As the vine curls her tendrils, which imply'd
Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,
And sweet reluctant amorous delay.
Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd ;
Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
Of nature's works ; honour dishonourable,
Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind
With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,
Simplicity and spotless innocence !
So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
Of God or Angel, for they thought no ill :
So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair
That ever since in love's embraces met ;
Adam the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
Under a tuft of shade that on a green
Stood whisp'ring soft, by a fresh fountain side
They sat them down ; and after no more toil
Of their sweet gard'ning labour, than suffic'd
To recommend cool zephyr, and made ease
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell,
Nectarine fruits which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, side-long as they sat recline
On the soft downy bank damask'd with flow'rs
The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind
Still as they thirsted scoop the brimming stream .

Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance as beseems
Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
Alone as they. About them frisking play'd
All beasts of th' earth, since wild, and of all chase
In wood or wilderness, forest or den ;
Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
Dandled the kid ; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
Gambol'd before them ; th' unwieldy elephant,
To make them mirth, us'd all his might, and wreath'd
His lithe proboscis ; close the serpent sly
Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
His braided train, and of his fatal guile
Gave proof unheeded ; others on the grass
Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing sat,
Or bedward ruminating ; for the sun
Declin'd was hasting now with prone career
To the ocean isles, and in th' ascending scale
Of heav'n, the stars that usher evening rose :
When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad.

O hell ! what do mine eyes with grief behold !
Into our room of bliss thus high advanc'd
Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,
Not spirits, yet to heav'nly spirits bright
Little inferior : whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and such grace
The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.
Ah gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish and deliver ye to wo,
More wo, the more your taste is now of joy ;
Happy, but for so happy ill secur'd
Long to continue, and this high seat your heav'n
Ill fenced for heaven to keep out such a foe
As now is enter'd ; yet no purpos'd foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied : league with you I seek,

And mutual amity so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth: my dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense, yet such
Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me,
Which I as freely give; hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings; there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring; if no better place,
Thank him who puts me loth to this revenge
On you who wrong me not, for him who wrong'd.
And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honour and empire with revenge enlarg'd,
By conq'ring this new world, compels me now
To do what else though damn'd I should abhor.

So spake the fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea excus'd his devilish deeds.
Then from his lofty stand on that high tree
Down he alights among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
Now other, as their shape serv'd best his end
Nearer to view his prey, and unespied
To mark what of their state he more might learn
By word or action mark'd: about them round,
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spy'd
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Straight couches close, then rising, changes oft
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
Whence rushing he might surest seize them both
Grip'd in each paw; when Adam first of men
To first of women Eve, thus moving speech,
Turn'd him all ear to hear new utterance flow.

Sole partner, and sole part, of all these joys,
Dearer thyself than all; needs must the Pow'r
That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good, and of his good

As liberal and free as infinite ;
That rais'd us from the dust and plac'd us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Aught whereof he hath need, he who requires
From us no other service than to keep
This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that only tree
Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life ;
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,
Some dreadful thing no doubt : for well thou know'st
God hath pronounc'd it death to taste that tree,
The only sign of our obedience left
Among so many signs of power and rule
Conferr'd upon us, and dominion given
Over all other creatures that possess
Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
One easy prohibition, who enjoy
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
Unlimited of manifold delights :
But let us ever praise him, and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flow'rs,
Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.

To whom thus Eve reply'd : O thou for whom
And from whom I was form'd, flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom am to no end, my guide
And head, what thou hast said is just and right,
For we to him indeed all praises owe,
And daily thanks ; I chiefly who enjoy
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thyself canst no where find.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awak'd, and found myself repos'd
Under a shade on flow'rs, much wond'ring where
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how
Not distant far from thence a murm'ring sound

Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmov'd
Pure as th' expanse of heav'n ; I thither went
With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite
A shape within the wat'ry gleam appear'd,
Bending to look on me : I started back,
It started back ; but pleas'd I soon return'd,
Pleas'd it return'd as soon with answering looks
Of sympathy and love ; there I had fix'd
Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warn'd me : what thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself ;
With thee it came and goes : but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays
Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he
Whose image thou art ; him thou shalt enjoy
Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd
Mother of human race. What could I do,
But follow straight, invisibly thus led ?
Till I espy'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
Under a plantain ; yet methought less fair,
Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
Than that smooth wat'ry image : back I turn'd ;
Thou following cry'st aloud, Return, fair Eve,
Whom fly'st thou ? whom thou fly'st, of him thou art,
His flesh, his bone ; to give thee being I lent
Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
Substantial life, to have thee by my side
Henceforth an individual solace dear ;
Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim
My other half : with that thy gentle hand
Seiz'd mine ; I yielded, and from that time see
How beauty is excell'd by manly grace
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.

So spake our general mother, and with eyes

Of conjugal attraction unprov'd,
And meek surrender, half-embracing lean'd
On our first father; half her swelling breast
Naked met his, under the flowing gold
Of her loose tresses hid; he in delight
Both of her beauty and submissive charms
Smil'd with superior love, as Jupiter
On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds
That shed May flow'rs; and press'd her matron lip
With kisses pure: aside the Devil turn'd
For envy, yet with jealous leer malign
Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plain'd:

Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two
Imparadis'd in one another's arms,
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
Of bliss on bliss; while I to hell am thrust,
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the least,
Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines.
Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
From their own mouths: all is not theirs it seems;
One fatal tree there stands of knowledge call'd,
Forbidden them to taste: knowledge forbidden?
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
Envy them that? can it be sin to know?
Can it be death? and do they only stand
By ignorance? is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience and their faith?
O fair foundation laid whereon to build
Their ruin! Hence I will excite their minds
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with design
To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt
Equal with gods: aspiring to be such,
They taste and die; what likelier can ensue?
But first with narrow search I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspy'd;
A chance, but chance may lead where I may meet
Some wand'ring spirit of heaven by fountain side.

Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw
What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may,
Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed.

So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
But with sly circumspection, and began
Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale hi
 roam.

Meanwhile in utmost longitude, where heav'n
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun
Slowly descended, and with right aspect
Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Levell'd his evening rays: it was a rock
Of alabaster, pil'd up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent
Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
Chief of the angelic guards, awaiting night:
About him exercis'd heroic games
Th' unarm'd youth of heav'n but nigh at hand
Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even
On a sun-beam, swift as a shooting star
In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fir'd
Impress the air, and shows the mariner
From what point of his compass to beware
Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste:

Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
No evil thing approach or enter in.
This day at height of noon came to my sphere
A spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know
More of th' Almighty's works, and chiefly man
God's latest image: I describ'd his way
Bent all on speed, and mark'd his airy gait;
But in the mount that lies from Eden north.

Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks
Alien from heav'n, with passions foul obscur'd :
Mine eye pursu'd him still, but under shade
Lost sight of him : one of the banish'd crew,
I fear, hath ventur'd from the deep, to raise
New troubles ; him thy care must be to find.

To whom the winged warrior thus return'd :
Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sit'st,
See far and wide : in at this gate none pass
The vigilance here plac'd, but such as come
Well known from heav'n ; and since meridian hour
No creature thence : if spirit of other sort,
So minded, have o'er-leap'd these earthly bounds
On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar :
But if within the circuit of these walks,
In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know.

So promis'd he ; and Uriel to his charge
Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd
Bore him slope downward to the sun now fall'n
Beneath th' Azores ; whether the prime orb,
Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd
Diurnal, or this less voluble earth,
By shorter flight to th' east, had left him there
Arraying with reflected purple and gold
The clouds that on his western throne attend.

Now came still evening on, and twilight grey
Had in her sober livery all things clad ;
Silence accompanied ; for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale ;
She all night long her amorous descant sung,
Silence was pleas'd : now glow'd the firmament
With living sapphires : Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon
Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent queen unveil'd her peerless light,

And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.
When Adam thus to Eve: Fair consort, th' hour
Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest,
Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep
Now falling with soft slumb'rous weight inclines
Our eye-lids: other creatures all day long
Rove idle unemploy'd, and less need rest;
Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of heav'n on all his ways,
While other animals unactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.
To-morrow ere fresh morning streak the east
With first approach of light, we must be risen,
And at our pleasant labour, to reform
Yon flow'ry arbours, yonder alleys green,
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth;
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums,
That lie bestrown unsightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;
Meanwhile, as Nature wills, night bids us rest.

To whom thus Eve with perfect beauty adorn'd:
My author and disposer, what thou bidst
Unargued I obey; so God ordains;
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise.
With thee conversing I forget all time;
All seasons and their change, all please alike.
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glist'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft show'rs; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night

With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of heav'n, her starry train;
But neither breath of morn, when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flow'r,
Glist'ring with dew; nor fragrance after showers:
Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet;
But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?

To whom our general ancestor reply'd:
Daughter of God and man, accomplish'd Eve,
These have their course to finish round the earth,
By morrow evening, and from land to land
In order, though to nations yet unborn,
Minist'ring light prepar'd they set and rise;
Lest total darkness should by night regain
Her old possession, and extinguish life
In nature and all things, which these soft fires
Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat
Of various influence foment and warm,
Temper or nourish, or in part shed down
Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
On earth, made hereby apter to receive
Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,
Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were none
That heav'n would want spectators, God want praise;
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep;
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
Both day and night: how often from the steep
Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or reponsive each to other's note,
Singing their great Creator? oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk
With heav'nly touch of instrumentals sounds

In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heav'n.

Thus talking, hand in hand alone they pass'd
On to their blissful bow'r! it was a place
Chos'n by the sov'reign Planter, when he fram'd
All things to man's delightful use; the roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade,
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf: on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub
Fenc'd up the verdant wall; each beauteous flow'r,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamine,
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and
wrought

Mossaic; under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth with rich inlay
Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem: other creature here,
Beast, bird, insect, or worm durst enter none;
Such was their awe of man. In shadier bower
More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor nymph,
Nor Faunus haunted. Here in close recess
With flowers, garlands, and sweet smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed,
And heav'nly choirs the hymenæan sung,
What day the genial angels to our sire
Brought her in naked beauty; more adorn'd,
More lovely than Pandora, whom the gods
Endow'd with all their gifts, and O too like
In sad event, when to th' unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnar'd
Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.

Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood,
Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heav'n.
Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole: Thou also mad'st the night,

Maker omnipotent, and thou the day,
Which we in our appointed work employ'd
Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
Ordain'd by thee, and this delicious place
For us too large, where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
But thou hast promis'd from us two, a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

This said unanimous, and other rites
Observing none, but adoration pure
Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
Handed they went; and eas'd the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear,
Straight side by side were laid; nor turn'd I ween
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refus'd:
Whatever hypocrites austere talk
Of purity, and place, and innocence,
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
Our Maker bids increase; who bids abstain
But our destroyer, foe to God and man?
Hail wedded love, mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise of all things common else.
By thee adult'rous love was driv'n from men
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of Father, son, and brother first were known.
Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets,
Whose bed is undefil'd and chaste pronounc'd,
Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs us'd.
Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights

His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here and revels ; not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd,
Casual fruition ; nor in court amours,
Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
Or serenade, which the starv'd lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.
These lull'd by nightingales embracing slept,
And on their naked limbs the flow'r'y roof
Show'r'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on,
Blest pair ; and O yet happiest, if ye seek
No happier state, and know to know no more.

Now had night measur'd with her shadowy cone
Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,
And from their ivory port the cherubim
Forth issuing at th' accustom'd hour stood arm'd
To their night watches in warlike parade,
When Gabriel to his next in pow'r thus spake :

Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south
With strictest watch ; these other wheel the north ;
Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part,
Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.
From these, two strong and subtle spirits he call'd
That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge :

Ithuriel and Zephon, with wing'd speed
Search through this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook ;
But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge,
Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.
This evening from the sun's decline arriv'd
Who tells of some infernal spirit seen
Hitherward bent (who could have thought ?) escap'd
The bars of hell, on errand bad no doubt :
Such where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.

So saying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazzling the moon ; these to the bow'r direct
In search of whom they sought : him there they found
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,
Assaying by his devilish art to reach
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge

Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams,
Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
Th' animal spirits that from pure blood arise
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits engend'ring pride.
Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear
Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness: up he starts
Discover'd and surpris'd. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
Fit for the tun some magazine to store
Against a rumour'd war, the smutty grain
With sudden blaze diffus'd inflames the air:
So started up in his own shape the fiend,
Back stept those two fair angels half amaz'd,
So sudden to behold the grisly king;
Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accost him soon:
Which of those rebel spirits adjudg'd to hell
Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison? and transform'd,
Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait,
Here watching at the head of these that sleep?

Know ye not then, said Satan, fill'd with scorn,
Know ye not me? ye knew me once no mate
For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar:
Not to know me argues yourselves unknown,
The lowest of your throng; or if ye know,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much in vain?

To whom thus Zephon, answer'ing scorn with scorn
Think not revolted spirit, thy shape the same,
Or undiminish'd brightness to be known,
As when thou stood'st in heav'n upright and pure;
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee: and thou resemblest now
Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul.
But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account

To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm.

So spake the cherub; and his grave rebuke,
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
Invincible: abash'd the Devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pin'd
His loss; but chiefly to find here observ'd
His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seem'd
Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,
Best, with the best, the sender, not the sent,
Or all at once; more glory will be won,
Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,
Will save us trial what the least can do
Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.

The fiend reply'd not, overcome with rage;
But like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,
Champing his iron curb; to strive or fly
He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd
His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh
The western point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,
Awaiting next command. To whom their chief,
Gabriel, from the front thus call'd aloud:

O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade,
And with them comes a third of regal port,
But faded splendour wan; who by his gait
And fierce demeanour seem the prince of hell,
Not likely to part hence without contest;
Stand firm, for in his looks defiance lours.

He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd,
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couch'd.

To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake:
Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd
To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress

By thy example, but have pow'r and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place ;
Employ'd it seems to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss ?

To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow ;
Gabriel, thou hadst in heav'n th' esteem of wise,
And such I held thee ; but this question ask'd
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain ?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from hell,
Though thither doom'd ? Thou wouldst thyself no
doubt,

And boldly venture to whatever place
Farthest from pain, where thou mightst hope to change
Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
Dole with delight, which in this place I sought ;
To thee no reason, who know'st only good,
But evil hast not try'd ; and wilt object
His will who bound us ? let him surer bar
His iron gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance ; thus much what was ask'd .
The rest is true, they found me where they say ;
But that implies not violence or harm.

Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel mov'd,
Disdainfully half smiling thus reply'd :
O loss of one in heav'n to judge of wise,
Since Satan fell whom folly overthrew,
And now returns him from his prison 'scap'd,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
Unlicens'd from his bounds in hell prescrib'd ;
So wise he judges it to fly from pain
However, and to 'scape his punishment.
So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrath,
Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight
Sev'nfold, and scourge that wisdom back to hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain
Can equal anger infinite provok'd.
But wherefore thou alone ? wherefore with thee
Came not all hell broke loose ? is pain to them

Less pain, less to be fled? or thou than they
Less hardy to endure? courageous chief,
The first in flight from pain, hadst thou alledg'd
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not came sole fugitive.

To which the fiend thus answer'd frowning stern:

Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,
Insulting angel: well thou know'st I stood
Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid
The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,
And seconded by thy else not dreaded spear.
But still thy words at random as before,
Argue thy inexperience what behoves
From hard assays and ill successes past
A faithful leader, not to hazard all
Through ways of danger by himself untry'd:
I therefore, I alone first undertook
To wing the desolate abyss, and spy
This new created world, whereof in hell
Fame is not silent, here in hope to find
Better abode, and my afflicted powers
To settle here on earth, or in mid air;
Though for possession put to try once more
What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
Whose easier business were to serve the Lord
High up in heav'n, with songs to hymn his throne,
And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight.

To whom the warrior angel soon reply'd:
To say, and straight unsay, pretending first
Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
Argues no leader but a liar trac'd,
Satan, and could'st thou faithful add? O name,
O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd!
Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
Was this your discipline and faith engag'd,
Your military obedience, to dissolve
Allegiance to the acknowledg'd power supreme?
And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem

Patron of liberty, who more than thou
 Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servilely ador'd
 Heav'n's awful monarch? wherefore but in hope
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
 But mark what I aread thee now, Avaunt;
 Fly thither whence thou fledst: if from this hour
 Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
 Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chain'd,
 And seal thee so, as henceforth, not to scorn
 The facile gates of hell too slightly barr'd.

So threaten'd he; but Satan to no threats
 Gave heed, but waxing more in rage reply'd:

Then when I am thy captive talk of chains,
 Proud limitary cherub,* but ere then
 Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
 From my prevailing arm, though heav'n's King
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
 Us'd to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels
 In progress through the road of heav'n star-pav'd.

While thus he spake, th' angelic squadron bright
 Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned horns
 Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
 With ported spears, as thick as when a field
 Of Ceres ripe for harvest, waving bends
 Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
 Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting stands,
 Lest on the threshing-floor his hopeful sheaves
 Prove chaff. On th' other side Satan alarm'd
 Collecting all his might dilated stood,
 Like Teneriffe or Atlas unremov'd:
 His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
 Sat horror plum'd: nor wanted in his grasp
 What seem'd both spear and shield: now dreadful
 deeds

Might have ensued, nor only Paradise
 In this commotion, but the starry cope

* "Proud limitary cherub:" *limitary* means guarding the *limits*.

Of heav'n perhaps, or all the elements
At least had gone to wreck, disturb'd and torn
With violence of this conflict, had not soon
Th' eternal to prevent such horrid fray
Hung forth in heav'n his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astrea and the scorpion sign,
Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
The pendulous round earth with balanc'd air
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
Battles and realms : in these he put two weights
The sequel each of parting and of fight ;
The latter quick up flew, and kick'd the beam ;
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend :

Satan, I know thy strength and thou know'st mine,
Neither our own but giv'n ; what folly then
To boast what arms can do ? since thine no more
Than heav'n permits, nor mine, though doubled now
To trample thee as mire : for proof look up,
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,
Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how
weak,

If thou resist. The fiend look'd up and knew
His mounted scale aloft : nor more ; but fled
Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of night.

END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.



THE
FIFTH BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

MORNING approached, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream ; he likes it not, yet comforts her : they come forth to their day labours : their morning hymn at the door of their bower. God to render man inexcusable sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience, of his free estate, of his enemy near at hand, who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise, his appearance described, his coming discerned by Adam afar off, sitting at the door of his bower ; he goes out, to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise, got together by Eve ; their discourse at table : Raphael performs his message, minds Adam of his state and of his enemy ; relates at Adam's request, who that enemy is, and how he came to be so, beginning from his first revolt in Heaven, and the occasion thereof ; how he drew his legions after him to the parts of the north, and there incited them to rebel with him, persuading all but only Abdiel a seraph, who in argument dissuades and opposes him, then forsakes him.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK V.

Now morn her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam wak'd, so custom'd, for his sleep
Was airy light from pure digestion bred,
And temp'rate vapours bland, which th' only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan
Lightly disper'd, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough; so much the more
His wonder was to find unwaken'd Eve
With tresses discompos'd, and glowing cheek,
As through unquiet rest: he on his side
Leaning half rais'd, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice
Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus: Awake
My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
Heav'n's last, best gift, my ever new delight,
Awake; the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom, extracting liquid sweet.

Such whisp'ring wak'd her, but with startled eye
On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake :

O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My glory, my perfection, glad I see
Thy face, and morn return'd ; for I this night
(Such night till this I never pass'd) have dream'd,
If dream'd, not as I oft am wont, of thee,
Works of day past, or morrow's next design,
But of offence and trouble, which my mind
Knew never till this irksome night : methought,
Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
With gentle voice, I thought it thine ; it said,
Why sleep'st thou Eve ? now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake
Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song ; now reigns
Full orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
Shadowy sets off the face of things : in vain,
If none regard ; heav'n wakes with all his eyes,
Whom to behold but thee, nature's desire ?
In whose sight all things joy with ravishment,
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not ;
To find thee I directed then my walk ;
And on, methought, alone I pass'd through ways
That brought me on a sudden to the tree
Of interdicted knowledge : fair it seem'd,
Much fairer to my fancy than by day :
And as I wond'ring look'd, beside it stood
One shap'd and wing'd like one of those from heav'n
By us oft seen : his dewy locks distill'd
Ambrosia ; on that tree he also gaz'd ;
And O fair plant, said he, with fruit surcharg'd,
Deigns none to ease thy load and taste thy sweet.
Nor God, nor man ? is knowledge so despis'd ?
Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste ?
Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
Longer thy offer'd good, why else set here ?
This said, he paus'd not, but with vent'rous arm

He pluck'd, he tasted ; me damp horror chill'd
At such bold words vouch'd with a deed so bold :
But he thus overjoy'd, O fruit divine,
Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,
Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
For gods, yet able to make gods of men !
And why not gods of men, since good the more
Communicated, more abundant grows,
The author not impair'd, but honour'd more ?
Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve,
Partake thou also ; happy though thou art,
Happier thou may'st be, worthier canst not be ;
Taste this, and be henceforth among the gods
Thyself a goddess, not to earth confin'd,
But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes
Ascend to heav'n, by merit thine, and see
What life the gods live there, and such live thou.
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
Ev'n to my mouth of that same fruit held part
Which he had pluck'd ; the pleasant savoury smell
So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought,
Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
With him I flew, and underneath beheld
The earth outstretch'd immense, a prospect wide
And various : wond'ring at my flight and change
To this high exaltation ; suddenly
My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
And fell asleep ; but O how glad I wak'd
To find this but a dream ! Thus Eve her night
Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad :

Best image of myself, and dearer half,
The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep,
Affects me equally ; nor can I like
This uncouth dream, of evil sprung I fear ;
Yet evil whence ? in thee can harbour none,
Created pure. But know, that in the soul
Are many lesser faculties, that serve
Reason as chief : among these fancy next
Her office holds : of all external thing,

Which the five watchful senses represent,
She forms imaginations, airy shapes,
Which reason joining, or disjoining, frames
All what we affirm or what deny, and call
Our knowledge or opinion ; then retires
Into her private cell when nature rests.
Oft in her absence mimic fancy wakes
To imitate her ; but misjoining shapes,
Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams,
Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.
Some such resemblances methinks I find
Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream,
But with addition strange ; yet be not sad.
Evil in the mind of God or man
May come and go, so unapprov'd and leave
No spot or blame behind : which gives me hope
That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream,
Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
Be not dishearten'd then, nor cloud those looks
That wont to be more cheerful and serene,
Than when fair morning first smiles on the world ;
And let us to our fresh employments rise
Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers
That open now their choicest bosom'd smells,
Reserv'd from night, and kept for thee in store.
So cheer'd he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd.
But silently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair ;
Two other precious drops that ready stood,
Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended.
So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.
But first, from under shady arb'rous roof
Soon as they forth were come to open sight
Of day-spring, and the sun, who scarce uprisen,
With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean brim,
Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,
Discovering in wide landscape all the east

Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid
In various style ; for neither various style
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounc'd or sung
Unmeditated, such prompt eloquence
Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse,
More tuneable than needed lute or harp
To add more sweetness ; and they thus began.

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair ; thyself how wondrous then !
Unspeakable, who sit'st above these heavens,
On us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works ; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and pow'r divine.
Speak ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,
Angels ; for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing ; ye in heaven,
On earth join all ye creatures to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.
Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,
And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou
fall'st.

Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fly'st,
With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies,
And ye five other wand'ring fires that move
In mystic dance not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.
Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth

Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run
Perpetual circle, multiform ; and mix
And nourish all things ; let your ceaseless change
Vary to our great Maker still new praise.
Ye mists and exhalations that now rise
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or grey,
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honour to the world's great Author rise,
Whether to deck with clouds th' uncolour'd sky,
Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,
Rising or falling still advance his praise.
His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud ; and wave your tops, ye pines ;
With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
Join voices, all ye living souls ; ye birds,
That singing up to heaven gate ascend,
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk
The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep ;
Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade
Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
Hail universal Lord, be bounteous still
To give us only good ; and if the night
Have gather'd ought of evil, or conceal'd,
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark.

So pray'd they innocent, and to their thoughts
Firm peace recover'd soon, and wonted calm.
On to their morning's rural work they haste
Among sweet dews and flow'rs ; where any row
Of fruit-trees over-woody reach'd too far
Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check
Fruitless embraces : or they led the vine
To wed her elm ; she 'spous'd about him twines
Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
Her dow'r th' adopted clusters, to adorn
His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld

With pity heav'n's high King, and to him call'd
Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deign'd
To travel with Tobias, and secur'd
His marriage with the sev'ntimes-wedded maid.

Raphael, said he, thou hear'st what stir on earth
Satan from hell 'scap'd through the darksome gulf
Hath rais'd in Paradise, and how disturb'd
This night the human pair, how he designs
In them at once to ruin all mankind.
Go therefore, half this day, as friend with friend,
Converse with Adam, in what bow'r or shade
Thou find'st him from the heat of noon retir'd
To respite his day-labour with repast,
Or with repose ; and such discourse bring on,
As may advise him of his happy state,
Happiness in his pow'r left free to will,
Left to his own free will, his will though free,
Yet mutable ; whence warn him to beware
He swerve not too secure : tell him withal
His danger, and from whom ; what enemy,
Late fall'n himself from heav'n, is plotting now
The fall of others from like state of bliss ;
By violence ? no, for that shall be withstood ,
But by deceit and lies ; this let him know,
Lest wilfully transgressing he pretend
Surprisal, unadmonish'd, unforewarn'd.

So spake th' eternal Father, and fulfill'd
All justice ; nor delay'd the winged saint
After his charge receiv'd ; but from among
Thousand celestial ardours, where he stood
Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up springing light
Flew through the midst of heav'n ; th' angelic choirs,
On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
Through all th' empyreal road ; till at the gate
Of heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-open'd wide
On golden hinges turning, as by work
Divine the sov'reign architect had fram'd.
From hence, no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
Star interpos'd, however small he sees,

Not unconform to other shining globes,
Earth and the gard'n of God, with cedars crown'd
Above all hills. As when by night the glass
Of Galileo, less assur'd, observes
Imagin'd lands and regions in the moon :
Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades,
Delos or Samos first appearing, kens
A cloudy spot. Down thither, prone in flight
He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
Sail'd between worlds and worlds, with steady wing
Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
Winnows the buxom air ; till within soar
Of tow'ring eagles, to all the fowls he seems
A phoenix, gaz'd by all, as that sole bird,
When to enshrine his reliques in the sun's
Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
At once on th' eastern cliff of Paradise
He lights, and to his proper shape returns
A seraph wing'd ; six wings he wore, to shade
His lineaments divine ; the pair that clad
Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
With regal ornament ; the middle pair
Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
And colours dipt in heav'n ; the third his feet
Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
Sky-tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood,
And shook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
Of angels under watch ; and to his state,
And to his message high in honour rise ;
For on some message high they guess'd him bound :
Their glittering tents he pass'd, and now is come
Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
And flow'ring odours, cassia, nard, and balm ;
A wilderness of sweets : for nature here
Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
Wild above rule or art ; enormous bliss.

Him through the spicy forest onward come,
Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat
Of his cool bow'r, while now the mounted sun
Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm
Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam
needs :

And Eve within, due at her hour prepar'd
For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst
Of nect'reous draughts between, from milky stream,
Berry or grape : to whom thus Adam call'd :

Haste hither Eve, and worth thy sight behold
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving ; seems another morn
Ris'n on mid-noon ; some great behest from heav'n
To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
And what thy stores contain, bring forth, and pour
Abundance, fit to honour and receive
Our heav'nly stranger : well we may afford
Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
From large bestow'd, where nature multiplies
Her fertile growth, and by disburd'ning grows
More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare.

To whom thus Eve : Adam, earth's hallow'd mould
Of God inspir'd, small store will serve, where store,
All seasons ripe for use, hangs on the stalk ;
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes :
But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice
To entertain our angel guest, as he
Beholding shall confess, that here on earth
God hath dispens'd his bounties as in heav'n.

So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste
She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
What choice to choose for delicacy best,
What order, so contriv'd as not to mix

Tastes, not well join'd inelegant, but bring
Taste after taste upheld with kindest change ;
Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
Whatever earth all-bearing mother yields
In India East or West, or middle shore
In Pontus or the Punic coast, or where
Alcinous reign'd fruit of all kinds, in coat
Rough or smooth rin'd, or bearded husk, or shell,
She gathers tribute large, and on the board
Heaps with unsparing hand ; for drink the grape
She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths
From many a berry, and from sweet kernels press'd
She tempers dulcet creams, nor these to hold
Wants her fit vessels pure, then strows the ground
With rose and odours from the shrub unfum'd.

Meanwhile our primitive great sire, to meet
His godlike-guest, walks forth, without more train
Accompanied than with his own complete
Perfections ; in himself was all his state,
More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
On princes, when the rich retinue long
Of horses led, and grooms besmear'd with gold,
Dazzles the crowd, and sets them all agape.
Nearer his presence Adam though not aw'd,
Yet with submissive approach and reverence meet,
As to a superior nature, bowing low,
Thus said : Native of heav'n, for other place
None can than heav'n such glorious shape contain ;
Since by descending from the thrones above,
Those happy places thou hast deign'd awhile
To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us
Two only, who yet by sov'reign gift possess
This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
To rest, and what the garden choicest bears
To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
Be over, and the sun more cool decline.

Whom thus th' angelic virtue answer'd mild :
Adam I therefore came, nor art thou such
Created, or such place hast here to dwell,

As may not oft invite, though spirits of heav'n
To visit thee ; lead on then where thy bower
O'ershades ; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
I have at will. So to the sylvan lodge
They came, that like Pomona's arbour smil'd
With flow'rets deck'd, and fragrant smells ; but **Eve**,
Undeck'd save with herself, more lovely fair
Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd
Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,
Stood to entertain her guest from heav'n ; no veil
She needed, virtue-proof ; no thought infirm
Alter'd her cheek. On whom the angel, Hail,
Bestow'd, the holy salutation us'd
Long after to the blest Mary, second Eve.

Hail mother of mankind, whose fruitful womb
Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,
Than with these various fruits the trees of God
Have heap'd this table. Rais'd of grassy turf
Their table was, and mossy seats had round,
And on her ample square from side to side
All autumn pil'd, though spring and autumn here
Danc'd hand in hand. Awhile discourse they held ;
No fear lest dinner cool ; when thus began
Our author : Heav'nly stranger, please to taste
These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom
All perfect good, unmeasur'd out, descends,
To us for food and for delight hath caus'd
The earth to yield ; unsavoury food perhaps
To spiritual natures ; only this I know,
That one celestial Father gives to all.
To whom the Angel : Therefore what he gives
(Whose praise be ever sung) to man in part
Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found
No ingrateful food ; and food alike those pure
Intelligential substances require,
As doth your rational ; and both contain
Within them every lower faculty
Of sense whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, **taste**.
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,

And corporeal, to incorporeal turn.
For know, whatever was created, needs
To be sustain'd and fed ; of elements
The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
Ethereal, and as lowest first the moon ;
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg'd
Vapours not yet into her substance turn'd.
Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
From her moist continent to higher orbs.
The sun that light imparts to all, receives
From all his alimantal recompense
In humid exhalations, and at even
Supps with the ocean. Though in heav'n the trees
Of life, ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
Yield nectar, though from off the boughs each morn
We brush mellifluous dewes, and find the ground
Cover'd with pearly grain : yet God hath here
Varied his bounty so with new delights,
As may compare with heav'n ; and to taste
Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,
And to their viands fell ; nor seemingly
The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss
Of theologians ; but with keen despatch
Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
To transubstantiate : what redounds, transpires
Through spirits with ease · nor wonder ; if by fire
Of sooty coal th' empiric alchemist
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
As from the mine. Meanwhile at table Eve
Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
With pleasant liquors crown'd : O innocence
Deserving Paradise ! if ever, then,
Then had the sons of God excuse to have been
Enamour'd at that sight ; but in those hearts
Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
Was understood, the injur'd lover's hell.
Thus when with meats and drinks they had suffic'd,

Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose
In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass
Given him by this great conference to know
Of things above his world, and of their being
Who dwell in heav'n, whose excellence he saw
Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms
Divine effulgence, whose high pow'r so far
Exceeded human, and his wary speech
Thus to th' empyreal minister he fram'd:
Inhabitant with God, now know I well
Thy favour, in this honour done to man,
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsaf'd
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
Food not of angels, yet accepted so,
As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
At heav'n's high feast t' have fed: yet what compare?

To whom the winged hierarch reply'd:
O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return,
If not deprav'd from good, created all
Such to perfection, one first matter all,
Endued with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refin'd, more spiritous, and pure,
As nearer to him plac'd or nearer tending
Each in their several active spheres assign'd,
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the
leaves

More airy, last the bright consummate flower
Spirit odorous breathes: flow'rs and their fruit,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,
To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
To intellectual; give both life and sense,
Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
Reason receives, and reason is her being,
Discursive, or intuitive; discourse
Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,

Differing but in degree, of kind the same.
Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
If I refuse not, but convert, as you
To proper substance ; time may come, when men
With angels may participate and find
No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare ;
And from these corporeal nutriments perhaps
Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
Improv'd by tract of time, and wing'd ascend
Ethereal, as we, or may at choice
Here, or in heav'nly Paradise dwell ;
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire,
Whose progeny you are. Meanwhile enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happy state
Can comprehend, incapable of more.

To whom the patriarch of mankind reply'd :
O favourable spirit, propitious guest,
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
From centre to circumference, whereon
In contemplation of created things
By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
What meant that caution join'd, If ye be found
Obedient ? can we want obedience then
To him, or possibly his love desert,
Who form'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend ?

To whom the angel : Son of heav'n and earth,
Attend : that thou art happy, owe to God ;
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
That is to thy obedience ; therein stand.
This was that caution given thee ; be advised.
God made thee perfect not immutable ;
And good he made thee, but to persevere
He left it in thy pow'r ; ordain'd thy will
By nature free, not over-rul'd by fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity :

Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our necessitated ; such with him
Finds no acceptance, nor can find ; for how
Can hearts, not free, be try'd whether they serve ;
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other choose ?
Myself and all th' angelic host, that stand
In sight of God enthron'd, our happy state
Hold as you yours, while our obedience holds :
On other surety none ; freely we serve,
Because we freely love, as in our will
To love or not ; in this we stand or fall ;
And some are fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,
And so from heav'n to deepest hell : O fall
From what high state of bliss into what wo !

To whom our great progenitor : Thy words
Attentive, and with more delighted ear,
Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
Cherubic songs by night from neighb'ring hill
Aereal music send ; nor know I not
To be both will and deed created free ;
Yet that we never shall forget to love
Our Maker, and obey him whose command
Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
Assur'd me, and still assure : though what thou tell'st
Hath pass'd in heav'n, some doubt within me move,
But more desire to hear, if thou consent,
The full relation, which must needs be strange,
Worthy of sacred silence to be heard ;
And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun
Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins
His other half in the great zone of heav'n.

Thus Adam made request ; and Raphael
After short pause assenting, thus began :

High matter thou enjoin'st me, O prime of men,
Sad task and hard ; for how shall I relate
To human sense th' invisible exploits
Of warring spirits ? how without remorse
The ruin of so many glorious once,

And perfect while they stood ? how last unfold
The secrets of another world, perhaps
Not lawful to reveal ? yet for thy good
This is dispens'd : and what surmounts the reach
Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
By likening spiritual to corporeal forms,
As may express them best ; though what if earth
Be but the shadow of heav'n, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought ?

As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
Reign'd where these heav'ns, now roll, where earth
now rests

Upon her centre pois'd ; when on a day
(For time, though in eternity, apply'd
To motion, measures all things durable
By present, past, and future,) on such day
As heav'n's great year brings forth, th' empyreal host
Of angels by imperial summons call'd
Innumerable before th' Almighty's throne
Forthwith from all the ends of heav'n appear'd
Under their hierarchies in orders bright :
Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,
Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear
Stream in the air, and for distinction serve
Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees ;
Or in their glittering tissues bear emblaz'd
Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs
Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
Orb within orb, the Father infinite,
By whom in bliss imbosom'd sat the Son,
Amidst as from a flaming mount, whose top
Brightness had made invisible, thus spake :

Hear all ye angels, progeny of light,
Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers
Hear my decree, which unrevok'd shall stand.
This day I have begot whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold

At my right hand : your head I him appoint ;
And by myself have sworn to him shall bow
All knees in heav'n, and shall confess him Lord :
Under his great vicegerent reign abide
United as one individual soul
For ever happy ; him who disobeys,
Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day
Cast out from God, and blessed vision, falls
Into utter darkness, deep ingulf'd, his place
Ordain'd without redemption, without end.

So spake th' Omnipotent, and with his words
All seem'd well pleas'd : all seem'd, but were not all,
That day, as other solemn days, they spent
In song and dance about the sacred hill ;
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere
Of planets and of fix'd in all her wheels
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolv'd, yet regular
Then most, when most irregular they seem ;
And in their motions harmony divine
So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear
Listens delighted. Evening now approach'd
(For we have also our evening and our morn,
We ours for change delectable, not need,)
Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn
Desirous ; all in circles as they stood,
Tables are set, and on a sudden pil'd
With angels' food, and rubied nectar flows
In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of heav'n.
On flow'rs repos'd, and with fresh flow'rets crown'd,
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy, secure
Of surfeit where full measure only bounds
Excess, before th' all-bounteous King, who show'r'd
With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
Now when ambrosial night with clouds exhal'd
From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
Spring both, the face of brightest heav'n had chang'd

The grateful twilight (for night comes not there
In darker veil,) and roseate dew's dispos'd
All but th' unsleeping eyes of God to rest;
Wide over the plain, and wider far
Than all this globous earth in plain outspread
(Such are the courts of God,) th' angelic throng,
Dispers'd in bands and files, their camp extend
By living streams among the trees of life,
Pavilions numberless, and sudden rear'd
Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
Fann'd with cool winds; save those who in their course
Melodious hymn about the sov'reign throne
Alternate, all night long: but not so wak'd
Satan: so call him now, his former name
Is heard no more in heav'n; he of the first,
If not the first arch-angel, great in pow'r,
In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
With envy against the Son of God, that day
Honour'd by his great Father, and proclaim'd
Messiah King anointed, could not bear
Through pride that sight, and thought himself impair'd,
Deep malice thence conceiving, and disdain;
Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv'd
With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
Unworship'd unbey'd the throne supreme
Contemptuous, and his next subordinate
Awak'ning, thus to him in secret spake:

Sleep'st thou, companion dear, what sleep can close
Thy eye-lids? and rememb'rest what decree
Of yesterday, so late hath pass'd the lips
Of heaven's Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts
Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont t' impart:
Both waking we were one; how then can now
Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest impos'd,
New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
In us who serve, new counsels, to debate
What doubtful may ensue: more in this place
To utter is not safe. Assemble thou

Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
Tell them that by command, ere yet dim night
Her shadowy cloud withdraws I am to haste,
And all who under me their banners wave,
Homeward with flying march where we possess
The quarters of the north; there to prepare
Fit entertainment to receive our King,
The great Messiah, and his new commands,
Who speedily through all the hierarchies
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.

So spake the false arch-angel, and infus'd
Bad influence into th' unwary breast
Of his associate: he together calls,
Or several one by one, the regent powers,
Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
That the most High commanding, now ere night,
Now ere dim night had disencumber'd heav'n,
The great hierarchial standard was to move;
Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
Or taint integrity; but all obey'd
The wonted signal, and superior voice
Of their great potentate; for great indeed
His name, and high was his degree in heav'n;
His count'nance, as the morning star that guides
The starry flock, allur'd them, and with lies
Drew after him the third part of heav'n's host.
Meanwhile th' eternal eye, whose sight discerns
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount
And from within the golden lamps that burn
Nightly before him, saw without their light
Rebellion rising, saw in whom, how spread
Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
Were banded to oppose his high decree;
And smiling to his only Son thus said:

Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
In full resplendence, heir of all my might,
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
Of our omnipotence, and with what arms

We mean to hold what anciently we claim
Of deity or empire; such a foe
Is rising, who intends to erect his throne
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north;
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
In battle, what our pow'r is, or our right.
Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
With speed what force is left, and all employ
In our defence, lest unawares we lose
This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.

To whom the son with calm aspect and clear,
Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,
Made answer: Mighty Father, thou thy foes
Justly hast in derision, and secure
Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain,
Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
Illustrates, when they see all regal power
Giv'n me to quell their pride, and in event
Know whether I be dex'trous to subdue
Thy rebels, or be found the worst in heav'n.

So spake the Son; but Satan with his powers
Far was advanc'd on winged speed, a host
Innumerable as the stars of night,
Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
Regions they pass'd, the mighty regencies
Of seraphim, and potentates, and thrones,
In their triple degrees: regions to which
All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
Than what this garden is to all the earth,
And all the sea, from one entire globose
Stretch'd into longitude; which having pass'd
At length into the limits of the north
They came, and Satan to his royal seat
High on a hill, far blazing as a mount
Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and towers
From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold,
The palace of great Lucifer (so call
That structure in the dialect of men

Interpreted,) which not long after, he
Affecting all equality with God,
In imitation of that mount whereon
Messiah was declar'd in sight of heav'n,
The Mountain of the Congregation call'd ;
For thither he assembled all his train,
Pretending so commanded to consult
About the great reception of their king
Thither to come, and with calumnious art
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears :

Thrones, dominations, principdoms, virtues, powers,
If these magnific titles yet remain
Not merely titular, since by decree
Another now hath to himself engross'd
All power, and us eclips'd under the name
Of king anointed, for whom all this haste
Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,
This only to consult how we may best
With what may be devis'd of honours new,
Receive him coming to receive from us
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
Too much to one, but double how endur'd,
To one and to his image now proclaim'd ?
But what if better counsels might erect
Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke ?
Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
The supple knee ? ye will not, if I trust
To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves
Natives and sons of heav'n possess'd before
By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free ; for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
Who can in reason then or right assume
Monarchy over such as live by right
His equals, if in power and splendour less,
In freedom equal ? or can introduce
Law and edict on us, who without law
Err not ? much less for this to be our Lord,
And look for adoration to th' abuse

Of those imperial titles, which assert
Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve.

Thus far his bold discourse without control
Had audience, when among the seraphim,
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal ador'd
The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe
The current of his fury thus oppos'd :

O argument blasphemous, false and proud !
Words which no ear ever to hear in heav'n
Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate,
In place thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
The just decree of God, pronounc'd and sworn,
That to his only Son by right endued
With regal sceptre, every soul in Heaven
Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
Confess him rightful King ? unjust, thou say'st,
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
And equal over equals to let reign,
One over all with unsucceeded power.
Shalt thou give law to God, shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who made
Thee what thou art, and form'd the powers of heav'n
Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd their being ?
Yet by experience taught we know how good,
And of our good and of our dignity
How provident he is, how far from thought
To make us less, bent rather to exalt
Our happy state under one head more near
United. But to grant it thee unjust,
That equal over equals monarch reign :
Thyself though great and glorious dost thou count,
Or all angelic nature join'd in one,
Equal to him begotten Son ? by whom
As by his word the mighty Father made
All things, e'en thee ; and all the spirits of heav'n
By him created in their bright degrees,
Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory nam'd

Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers,
Essential pow'rs ; nor by his reign obscur'd,
But more illustrious made ; since he the head
One of our number thus reduc'd becomes ;
His laws our laws ; all honour to him done
Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
And tempt not these ; but hasten to appease
Th' incensed Father, and th' incensed Son,
While pardon may be found in time besought.

So spake the fervent angel ; but his zeal
None seconded, as out of season judg'd,
Or singular and rash, whereat rejoic'd,
Th' apostate, and more haughty thus reply'd :

That we were form'd then say'st thou ? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd
From Father to his Son ? strange point and new !
Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd : who
saw

When this creation was ? remember'st thou
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being ?
We know no time when we were not as now ;
Know none before us, self-begot, self-rai'd
By our own quick'ning pow'r, when fatal course
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Of this our native heav'n, ethereal sons,
Our puissance is our own ; our own right hand
Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
Who is our equal : then thou shalt behold
Whether by supplication we intend
Address, and to begirt th' almighty throne
Beseeching or besieging. This report,
These tidings carry to th' anointed King ;
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.

He said, and as the sound of waters deep,
Hoarse murmur echo'd to his words applause
Through the infinite host ; nor less for that
The flaming seraph fearless, though alone,
Encompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold :

O alienate from God, O spirit accurs'd,
Forsaken of all good ; I see thy fall
Determin'd, and thy hapless crew involv'd
In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread
Both of thy crime and punishment : henceforth
No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
Of God's Messiah : those indulgent laws
Will not be now vouchsaf'd ; other decrees
Against thee are gone forth without recal ;
That golden sceptre, which thou didst reject,
Is now an iron rod to bruise and break
Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise,
Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly
These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath
Impendent, raging into sudden flame
Distinguish not : for soon expect to feel
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.
Then who created thee lamenting learn,
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know.

So spake the seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he ;
Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshaken, uneduc'd, untterrify'd,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal ;
Nor number, nor example with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind
Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
Superior, nor of violence fear'd ought ;
And with retorted scorn his back he turn'd
On those proud tow'rs to swift destruction doom'd

THE
SIXTH BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

RAPHAEL continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battle against Satan and his angels. The first fight described : Satan and his powers retire under night : he calls a council, invents devilish engines, which, in the second day's fight, put Michael and his angels to some disorder ; but they at length, pulling up mountains, overwhelmed both the force and machines of Satan : yet, the tumult not so ending, God on the third day, sends Messiah his son, for whom he had reserved the glory of that victory : he, in the power of his Father, coming to the place, and causing all his legions to stand still on either side, with his chariot and thunder driving into the midst of his enemies, pursues them, unable to resist, towards the wall of Heaven ; which opening, they leap down with horror and confusion into the place of punishment prepared for them in the deep : Messiah returns with triumph to his Father.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VI.

ALL night the dreadless angel unpursu'd
Through heav'n's wide champaign held his way ; till
morn,

Wak'd by the circling hours, with rosy hand
Unbarr'd the gates of light. There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through
heav'n

Grateful vicissitude, like day and night ;
Light issues forth, and at the other door
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour
To veil the heav'n, though darkness there might
well

Seem twilight here : and now went forth the morn
Such as in highest heav'n, array'd in gold
Empyrean ; from before her vanish'd night,
Shot through with orient beams ; when all the plain
Cover'd with thick embattled squadrons bright,
Chariots and flaming arms, and fiery steeds
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view :
War he perceiv'd, war in procinct,* and found
Already known, what he for news had thought

* " War in procinct : " war prepared, or *ready-girded*.

To have reported : gladly then he mix'd
Among those friendly pow'rs, who him receiv'd
With joy and acclamations loud, that one,
That of so many myriads fall'n, yet one
Return'd not lost : on to the sacred hill
They led him high applauded, and present
Before the seat supreme ; from whence a voice
From midst a golden cloud thus mild was heard :

Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought
The better fight, who single hast maintain'd
Against revolted multitudes the cause
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms ;
And for the testimony of truth hast borne
Universal reproach, far worse to bear
Than violence ; for this was all thy care
To stand approv'd, in sight of God, though worlds
Judg'd thee perverse : the easier conquest now
Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
Back on thy foes more glorious to return
Than scorn'd thou didst depart, and to subdue
By force, who reason for their law refuse,
Right reason for their law, and for their King
Messiah ; who by right of merit reigns.
Go Michael of celestial armies prince,
And thou in military prowess next
Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons
Invincible, lead forth my armed saints
By thousands and by millions rang'd for fight,
Equal in number to that godless crew
Rebellious : them with fire and hostile arms
Fearless assault, and to the brow of heav'n
Pursuing drive them out from God and bliss
Into their place of punishment, the gulf
Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
His fiery chaos to receive their fall.

So spake the sov'reign voice, and clouds began
To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign
Of wrath awak'd ; nor with less dread the loud

Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow :
At which command the powers militant,
That stood for heav'n, in mighty quadrate join'd
Of union irresistible, mov'd on
In silence their bright legions, to the sound
Of instrumental harmony, that breath'd
Heroic ardour to advent'rous deeds
Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
Of God and his Messiah. On they move
Indissolubly firm ; nor obvious hill,
Nor strait'ning vale, nor wood, nor stream divides
Their perfect ranks ; for high above the ground
Their march was, and the passive air upbore
Their nimble tread ; as when the total kind
Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
Came summon'd over Eden to receive
Their names of thee ; so ever many a tract
Of heav'n they march'd, and many a province wide
Tenfold the length of this terrene : at last
Far in th' horizon to the north appear'd
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd
In battailous aspect, and nearer view
Bristled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
Various ; with boastful argument portray'd,
The banded pow'rs of Satan hasting on
With furious expedition ; for they ween'd
That self-same day by fight, or by surprise,
To win the mount of God, and on his throne
To set the envier of his state, the proud
Aspirer, but their thoughts prov'd fond and vain
In the mid-way ; though strange to us it seem'd
At first, that angel should with angel war,
And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
So oft in festivals of joy and love
Unanimous, as sons of one great sire
Hymning th' eternal Father ; but the shout
Of battle now began, and rushing sound
Of onset ended soon each milder thought.

High in the midst exalted as a God
Th' apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat,
Idol of majesty divine, enclos'd
With flaming cherubim and golden shields ;
Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left
A dreadful interval, and front to front
Presented, stood in terrible array
Of hideous length : before the cloudy van,
On the rough edge of battle ere it join'd,
Satan with vast and haughty strides advanc'd
Came tow'ring, arm'd in adamant and gold :
Abdiel that sight endur'd not, where he stood
Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
And thus his own undaunted heart explores :

O heav'n ! that such resemblance of the Highest
Should yet remain, where faith and realty
Remain not : wherefore should not strength and might
There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove
Where boldest, though to sight unconquerable ?
His puissance, trusting in th' Almighty's aid,
I mean to try, whose reason I have try'd
Unsound and false ; nor is it ought but just,
That he who in debate of truth hath won,
Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
Victor : though brutish that contest, and foul,
When reason hath to deal with force, yet so
Most reason is that reason overcome.

So pondering, and from his armed peers
Forth stepping opposite, half-way he met
His daring foe, at this prevention more
Incens'd, and thus securely him defy'd :

Proud, art thou met ? thy hope was to have reach'd
The height of thy aspiring unoppos'd,
The throne of God unguarded, and his side
Abandon'd at the terror of thy power
Or potent tongue : fool, not to think how vain
Against th' Omnipotent to rise in arms ;
Who out of smallest things could without end

Have rais'd incessant armies to defeat
Thy folly; or with solitary hand
Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow
Unaided could have finish'd thee, and whelm'd
Thy legions under darkness: but thou seest
All are not of thy train; there be who faith
Prefer, and piety to God, though then
To thee not visible, when I alone
Seem'd in thy world erroneous to dissent
From all: my sect thou seest; now learn too late
How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.

Whom the grand foe with scornful eye askance
Thus answer'd: Ill for thee, but in wish'd hour
Of my revenge first sought, for thou return'st
From flight, seditious angel, to receive
Thy merited reward, the first assay
Of this right hand provok'd, since first that tongue
Inspired with contradiction durst oppose
A third part of the gods, in synod met
Their deities to assert, who while they feel
Vigour divine within them, can allow
Omnipotence to none. But well thou com'st
Before thy fellows, ambitious to win
From me some plume, that thy success may show
Destruction to the rest: this pause between
(Unanswer'd lest thou boast) to let thee know;
At first I thought that liberty and heav'n
To heavenly souls had been all one; but now
I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
Minist'ring spirits, train'd up in feast and song;
Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsy of heav'n,
Servility with freedom to contend,
As both their deeds compar'd this day shall prove.

To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern reply'd:
Apostate, still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
Unjustly thou deprav'st it with the name
Of servitude to serve whom God ordains,
Or Nature; God and Nature bid the same,

When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs. This is servitude
To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,
Thyself not free, but to thyself inthral'd;
Yet lewdly dar'st our minist'ring upbraid.
Reign thou in hell thy kingdom; let me serve
In heav'n God ever blest, and his divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd:
Yet chains in hell, not realms expect: meanwhile
From me return'd as erst thou saidst, from flight,
This greeting on thy impious crest receive.

So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell
On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield
Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge
He back recoil'd; the tenth on bended knee
His massy spear upstay'd; as if on earth,
Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,
Sidelong had push'd a mountain from his seat
Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seiz'd
The rebel thrones, but greater rage to see
Thus foil'd their mightiest; ours joy fill'd, and shout
Presage of victory, and fierce desire
Of battle: whereat Michael bid sound
Th' arch-angel trumpet: through the vast of heav'n
It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
Hosanna to the Highest: nor stood at gaze
The adverse legions, nor less hideous join'd
The horrid shock: now storming fury rose,
And clamour such as heard in heav'n till now
Was never; arms on armour clashing bray'd
Horrible discord, and the madding wheels
Of brazen chariots rag'd; dire was the noise
Of conflict; over head the dismal hiss
Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,
And flying vaulted either host with fire:
So under fiery cope together rush'd

Both battles main, with ruinous assault
And inextinguishable rage ; all heav'n
Resounded, and had earth been then, all earth
Had to her centre shook. What wonder ? when
Millions of fierce encount'ring angels fought
On either side, the least of whom could wield
These elements, and arm him with the force
Of all their regions : how much more of pow'r
Army against army numberless to raise
Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,
Though not destroy, their happy native seat ;
Had not th' eternal King omnipotent
From his strong hold of heav'n high over-rul'd
And limited their might ; though number'd such
As each divided legion might have seem'd
A numerous host, in strength each armed hand
A legion, led in fight yet leader seem'd
Each warrior single as in chief, expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
Of battle, open when, and when to close
The ridges of grim war : no thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
That argued fear : each on himself rely'd,
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory : deeds of eternal fame
Were done, but infinite : for wide was spread
That war and various, sometimes on firm ground
A standing fight, then soaring on main wing
Tormented all the air ; all air seem'd then
Conflicting fire : long time in even scale
The battle hung : till Satan, who that day
Prodigious pow'r had shown, and met in arms
No equal, ranging through the dire attack
Of fighting seraphim confus'd, at length
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and fell'd
Squadrons at once ; with huge two-handed sway
Brandish'd aloft the horrid edge came down
Wide wasting ; such destruction to withstand
He hasted, and oppos'd the rocky orb

Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,
A vast circumference : at his approach
The great arch-angel from his warlike toil
Surceas'd, and glad as hoping here to end
Intestine war in heav'n, th' arch foe subdu'd
Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown
And visage all inflam'd first thus began :

Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
Unnam'd in heav'n, now plenteous, as thou seest
These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
Though heaviest by just measure on thyself
And thy adherents : how hast thou disturb'd
Heav'n's blessed peace, and into nature brought
Misery, uncreated till the crime
Of thy rebellion ? how hast thou instill'd
Thy malice into thousands, once upright
And faithful, now prov'd false ? But think not here
To trouble holy rest ; heav'n cast thee out
From all her confines. Heav'n the seat of bliss
Brooks not the works of violence and war.
Hence then, and evil go with thee along,
Thy offspring, to the place of evil, hell,
Thou and thy wicked crew ; there mingle broils,
Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
Or some more sudden vengeance wing'd from God
Precipitate thee with augmented pain.

So spake the prince of angels : to whom thus
The adversary : Nor think thou with wind
Of airy threats to awe whom yet with deeds
Thou canst not. Hast thou turn'd the least of these
To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise
Unvanquish'd, easier to transact with me,
That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
To chase me hence ? err not that so shall end
The strife which thou call'st evil, but we style
The strife of glory : which we mean to win,
Or turn this heav'n itself into the hell
Thou fablest, here however to dwell free,
If not to reign : meanwhile thy utmost force,

And join him nam'd Almighty to thy aid,
I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh.
They ended parle, and both address'd for fight
Unspeakable ; for who, though with the tongue
Of angels, can relate, or to what things
Likely on earth conspicuous, that may lift
Human imagination to such height
Of godlike pow'r ? for likest gods they seem'd,
Stood they or mov'd, in stature, motion, arms,
Fit to decide the empire of great heav'n.
Now wav'd their fiery swords, and in the air
Made horrid circles ; two broad suns their shields
Blaz'd opposite, while expectation stood
In horror ; from each hand with speed retir'd,
Where erst was thickest fight, th' angelic throng,
And left large field, unsafe within the wind
Of such commotion ; such as, to set forth
Great things by small, if nature's concord broke,
Among the constellations war were sprung,
Two planets rushing from aspect malign
Of fiercest opposition in mid sky
Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.
Together both with next to almighty arm
Up-lifted imminent, one stroke they aim'd
That might determine, and not need repeat,
As not of pow'r at once ; and odds appear'd
In might or swift prevention : but the sword
Of Michael from the armoury of God
Was given him temper'd so, that neither keen
Nor solid might resist that edge : it met
The sword of Satan with steep force to smite
Descending, and in half cut sheer ; nor stay'd,
But with swift wheel reverse, deep ent'ring shar'd
All his right side : then Satan first knew pain,
And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd : so sore
The griding sword with discontinuous wound
Pass'd through him : but th' etherial substance clos'd,
Not long divisible ; and from the gash
A stream of nect'rous humour, issuing flow'd

Sanguine, such as celestial spirits may bleed,
And all his armour stain'd erewhile so bright.
Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run
By angels many and strong, who interpos'd
Defence, while others bore him on their shields
Back to his chariot, where it stood retir'd
From off the files of war; there they him laid
Gnashing for anguish, and despite and shame,
To find himself not matchless, and his pride
Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
His confidence to equal God in pow'r.
Yet soon he heal'd; for spirits that live throughout
Vital in every part, not as frail man
In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
Cannot but by annihilating die;
Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more than can the fluid air;
All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,
All intellect, all sense; and as they please,
They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.

Meanwhile in other parts like deeds deserv'd
Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,
And with fierce ensigns pierc'd the deep array
Of Moloch furious king; who him defy'd,
And at his chariot wheels to drag him bound
Threaten'd, nor from the Holy One of heav'n
Refrain'd his tongue blasphemous; but anon
Down cloven to the waist, with shatter'd arms
And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing
Uriel and Raphael his vaunting foe,
Though huge, and in a rock of diamond arm'd,
Vanquish'd Adramelech, and Asmadai,
Two potent thrones, that to be less than gods
Disdain'd, but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,
Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.
Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow
Ariel and Arioch, and the violence

Of Ramial, scorch'd and blasted overthrew.
I might relate of thousands, and their names
Eternize here on earth: but those elect
Angels contented with their fame in heav'n,
Seek not the praise of men; the other sort,
In might though wondrous and in acts of war,
Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
Cancel'd from heav'n and sacred memory,
Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell.
For strength from truth divided and from just,
Illaudable naught merits but dispraise
And ignominy, yet to glory aspires
Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame;
Therefore eternal silence be their doom.

And now their mightiest quell'd, the battle swerv'd
With many an inroad gor'd; deformed rout
Enter'd, and foul disorder; all the ground
With shiver'd armour strown, and on a heap
Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd,
And fiery foaming steeds; what stood, recoil'd
O'er-wearied, through the faint satanic host
Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpris'd,
Then first with fear surpris'd and sense of pain,
Fled ignominious, to such evil brought
By sin of disobedience, till that hour
Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
Far otherwise th' inviolable saints
In cubic phalanx firm advanc'd entire,
Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd;
Such high advantages their innocence
Gave them above their foes, not to have sinn'd,
Not to have disobey'd; in fight they stood
Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pain'd
By wound, though from their place by violence mov'd

Now night her course began, and over heav'n
Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos'd,
And silence on the odious din of war:
Under her cloudy covert both retir'd,
Victor and vanquish'd; on the foughten field

Michael and his angels prevalent
Encamping, plac'd in guard their watches round,
Cherubic waving fires: on th' other part
Satan with his rebellious disappear'd,
Far in the dark dislodg'd; and void of rest,
His potentates to council call'd by night;
And in the midst thus undismay'd began:

O now in danger try'd, now known in arms
Not to be overpow'r'd, companions dear,
Found worthy not of liberty alone,
Too mean pretence, but what we more affect,
Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;
Who have sustain'd one day in doubtful fight
(And if one day, why not eternal days?)
What heav'n's Lord had pow'rfullest to send
Against us from about his throne, and judg'd
Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
But proves not so; then fallible it seems,
Of future we may deem him, though till now
Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly arm'd,
Some disadvantage we endur'd, and pain,
Till now not known, but known as soon contemn'd;
Since now we find this our empyreal form
Incapable of mortal injury,
Imperishable, and though pierc'd with wound,
Soon closing, and by native vigour heal'd.
Of evil then so small as easy think
The remedy; perhaps more valid arms,
Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
May serve to better us, and worse our foes,
Or equal what between us made the odds,
In nature none: if other hidden cause
Left them superior, while we can preserve
Unhurt our minds and understanding sound,
Due search and consultation will disclose.

He sat; and in th' assembly next upstood
Nisroch, of principalities the prime;
As one he stood escap'd from cruel fight,

Sore toil, his riven arms to havoc hewn,
And cloudy in aspect thus answering spake:

Deliverer from new lords, leader to free
Enjoyment of our rights as gods; yet hard
For gods, and too unequal work we find,
Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
Against unpain'd, impassive; from which evil
Ruin must needs ensue; for what avails
Valour or strength, though matchless, quell'd with pain
Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well
Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine,
But live content, which is the calmest life:
But pain is perfect misery, the worst
Of evils, and excessive, overturns
All patience. He who therefore can invent
With what more forcible we may offend
Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
No less than for deliverance what we owe.

Whereto with look compos'd Satan reply'd:
Not uninvented that, which thou aright
Believ'st so main to our success, I bring
Which of us who beholds the bright surface
Of this ethereal mould whereon we stand,
This continent of spacious heav'n adorn'd
With plant, fruit, flow'r ambrosial, gems and gold;
Whose eye so superficially surveys
These things, as not to mind from whence they grow
Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
Of spirituous and fiery spume, till touch'd
With heaven's ray, and temper'd they shoot forth
So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?
These in their dark nativity the deep
Shall yield us pregnant with infernal flame,
Which into hollow engines long and round
Thick-ramm'd, at th' other bore with touch of fire
Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth
From far with thund'ring noise among our foes

Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands
Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarm'd
The Thund'rer of his only dreaded bolt.

Nor long shall be our labour: yet ere dawn,
Effect shall end our wish. Meanwhile revive;
Abandon fear; to strength and council join'd
Think nothing hard, much less to be despair'd.

He ended, and his words their drooping cheer
Enlighten'd, and their languish'd hope reviv'd.
Th' invention all admir'd, and each, how he
To be th' inventor miss'd; so easy it seem'd
Once found, which yet unfound most would have tho't
Impossible: yet haply of thy race
In future days, if malice should abound,
Some one intent on mischief, or inspir'd
With dev'lish machination, might devise
Like instrument to plague the sons of men
For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
Forthwith from council to the work they flew;
Nor arguing stood; innumerable hands
Were ready; in a moment up they turn'd
Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath
Th' originals of nature in their crude
Conception: sulphurous and nitrous-foam
They found, they mingled, and with subtle art,
Concocted and adusted they reduc'd
To blackest grain, and into store convey'd;
Part hidden veins digg'd up (nor hath this earth
Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone,
Whereof to found their engines and their balls
Of missive ruin; part incentive reed
Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire.
So all ere day-spring, under conscious night
Secret they finish'd, and in order set,
With silent circumspection unesp'd.

Now when fair morn orient in heav'n appear'd,
Up rose the victor angels, and to arms
The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood

Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
Soon banded ; other from the dawning hills
Look'd round, and scouts each coast, light-armed scour
Each quarter, to descry the distant foe.
Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for fight,
In motion, or in halt ; him soon they met
Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow
But firm battalion ; back with speediest sail
Zophiel, of cherubim the swiftest wing,
Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cry'd :

Arm, warriors, arm for fight ; the foe at hand,
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
This day ; fear not his flight ; so thick a cloud
He comes, and settled in his face I see
Sad resolution and secure : let each
His adamantine coat gird well, and each
Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield.
Borne even or high ; for this day will pour down,
If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower,
But rattling storm of arrows barb'd with fire.

So warn'd he them aware themselves, and soon
In order, quit of all impediment,
Instant without disturb they took alarm,
And onward mov'd embattled : when behold
Not distant far with heavy pace the foe
Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube
Training his dev'lish enginery, empal'd
On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
To hide the fraud. At interview both stood
Awhile ; but suddenly at head appear'd
Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud :

Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold !
That all may see who hate us, how we seek
Peace and composure, and with open breast
Stand ready to receive them, if they like
Our overture, and turn not back perverse ;
But that I doubt : however witness heav'n,
Heav'n witness thou anon, while we discharge
Freely our part : ye who appointed stand,

Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch
What we propound, and loud that all may hear.

So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce
Had ended; when to right and left the front
Divided, and to either flank retir'd :
Which to our eyes discover'd, new and strange,
A triple-mounted row of pillars laid
On wheels, (for like to pillars most they seem'd,
Or hollow'd bodies made of oak or fir,
With branches lopt, in wood or mountain fell'd)
Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths
With hideous orifice gap'd on us wide,
Protending hollow truce : at each behind
A seraph stood, and in his hands a reed
Stood waving tipt with fire ; while we suspense,
Collected stood within our thoughts amus'd,
Not long, for sudden all at once their reeds
Put forth, and to a narrow vent apply'd
With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,
But soon obscur'd with smoke, all heav'n appear'd
From those deep-throated engines belch'd, whose roar
Embowel'd with outrageous noise the air,
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
Their dev'lish glut, chain'd thunderbolts and hail
Of iron globes ; which on the victor host
Levell'd, with such impetuous fury smote,
That whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
By thousands, angel on arch-angel roll'd ;
The sooner for their arms ; unarm'd they might
Have easily as spirits evaded swift
By swift contraction or remove ; but now
Foul dissipation follow'd and forc'd rout ;
Nor serv'd it to relax their serried files.
What should they do ? if on they rush'd, repulse
Repeated, and indecent overthrow
Doubled, would render them yet more despis'd,
And to their foes a laughter ; for in view
Stood rank'd of seraphim another row,

In posture to displode their second tier
Of thunder : back defeated to return
They worse abhorr'd. Satan beheld their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision call'd :

O friends, why come not on these victors proud ?
Erewhile they fierce were coming ; and when we,
To entertain them fair with open front
And breast (what could we more ?) propounded terms
Of composition, straight they changed their minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
As they would dance, yet for a dance they seem'd
Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps
For joy of offer'd peace : but I suppose,
If our proposals once again were heard,
We should compel them to a quick result.

To whom thus Belial in like gamesome mood :
Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home,
Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,
And stumbled many ; who receives them right
Had need from head to foot well understand ;
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They show us when our foes walk not upright.

So they among themselves in pleasant vein
Stood scoffing, heighten'd in their thoughts beyond
All doubt of victory : eternal might
To match with their inventions they presum'd
So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
And all his host derided, while they stood
Awhile in trouble : but they stood not long :
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
Against such hellish mischief fit t' oppose.
Forthwith (behold the excellence, the pow'r,
Which God hath in his mighty angels plac'd,)
Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
(For earth has this variety from heav'n
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale,)
Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew :
From their foundations loos'ning to and fro,

They pluck'd the seated hills with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops
Up-lifting bore them in their hands : amaze,
Be sure, and terror seiz'd the rebel host,
When coming towards them so dread they saw
The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd ;
Till on those cursed engines triple-row
They saw them whelm'd, and all their confidence
Under the weight of mountains buried deep ;
Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
Main promontories flung, which in the air
Came shadowing, and oppress'd whole legions arm'd ;
Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and
bruise'd,

Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,
Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
Out of such pris'n, though spirits of purest light,
Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
The rest in imitation to like arms
Betook them, and the neighb'ring hills uptore ;
So hills amid the air encounter'd hills
Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire,
That under ground they fought in dismal shade ;
Infernal noise ; war seem'd a civil game
To this uproar : horrid confusion heap'd
Upon confusion rose : and now all heaven
Had gone to wrack with ruin overspread,
Had not th' almighty Father, where he sits
Shrin'd in his sanctuary of heav'n secure,
Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd :
That his great purpose he might so fulfil,
To honour his anointed Son aveng'd
Upon his enemies, and to declare

All pow'r on him transferr'd : whence to his Son
Th' assessor of his throne he thus began :

Effulgence of my glory, Son belov'd,
Son in whose face invisible is beheld

Visibly, what by deity I am,
And in whose hand by what decree I do,
Second Omnipotence, two days are past,
Two days, as we compute the days of heav'n,
Since Michael and his pow'rs went forth to tame
These disobedient: sore hath been their fight,
As likeliest was, when two such foes met arm'd;
For to themselves I left them, and thou know'st,
Equal in their creation they were form'd,
Save what sin hath impair'd, which yet hath wrought
Insensible, for I suspend their doom;
Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
Endless, and no solution will be found:
War wearied hath perform'd what war can do,
And to disorder'd rage let loose the reins,
With mountains as with weapons arm'd, which makes
Wild work in heav'n, and dang'rous to the main.
Two days are therefore past, the third is thine;
For thee I have ordain'd it, and thus far
Have suffer'd, that the glory may be thine
Of ending this great war, since none but Thou
Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
Immense I have transfus'd, that all may know
In heav'n and hell thy pow'r above compare;
And this perverse commotion govern'd, thus
To manifest thee worthiest to be heir
Of all things, to be heir, and to be King
By sacred unction, thy deserved right.
Go then thou mightiest in thy Father's might,
Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
That shake heav'n's basis, bring forth all my war,
My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
Gird on; and sword upon thy puissant thigh,
Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out
From all heav'n's bounds into the utter deep:
There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
God and Messiah his annointed King.

He said, and on his Son with rays direct
Shone full: he all his Father full express'd

Ineffably into his face receiv'd ;

And thus the filial Godhead answering spake :

O Father, O Supreme of heav'nly Thrones,
First, highest, holiest, best, thou always seek'st
To glorify thy Son, I always thee,

As is most just ; this I my glory account,

My exaltation, and my whole delight,

That thou in me well pleas'd, declar'st thy will

Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.

Sceptre and pow'r, thy giving, I assume,

And gladlier shall resign, when in the end

Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee

For ever, and in me all whom thou lov'st :

But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on

Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,

Image of thee in all things ; and shall soon,

Arm'd with thy might, rid heav'n of these rebell'd,

To their prepar'd ill mansion driven down,

To chains of darkness, and th' undying worm,

That from thy just obedience could revolt,

Whom to obey is happiness entire.

Then shall thy saints unmix'd, and from th' impure

Far separate, circling thy holy mount

Unfeigned hallelujahs to thee sing,

Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief.

So said, he o'er his sceptre bowing, rose

From the right hand of glory where he sat ;

And the third sacred morn began to shine,

Dawning through heav'n : forth rush'd with whirl-
wind sound

The chariot of paternal Deity,

Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,

Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy'd

By four cherubic shapes ; four faces each

Had wondrous ; as with stars their bodies all,

And wings were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels

Of beril, and careering fires between ;

Over their heads a crystal firmament,

Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure

Amber, and colours of the show'ry arch.
He in celestial panoply all arm'd
Of radiant urim, work divinely wrought,
Ascended; at his right hand victory
Sat eagle-wing'd : beside him hung his bow
And quiver with three-bolted thunder stor'd,
And from about him fierce effusion roll'd
Of smoke and bickering flame and sparkles dire :
Attended with ten thousand thousand saints,
He onward came, far off his coming shone ;
And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen :
He on the wings of cherub rode sublime
On the crystalline sky, in sapphire thron'd
Illustrious far and wide, but by his own
First seen ; then unexpected joy surpris'd
When the great ensign of Messiah blaz'd
Aloft by angels borne, his sign in heaven ;
Under whose conduct Michael soon reduc'd
His army, circumfus'd on either wing,
Under their head embodied all one.
Before him pow'r divine his way prepar'd ;
At his command th' uprooted hills retir'd
Each to his place ; they heard his voice, and went
Obsequious ; heav'n his wonted face renew'd,
And with fresh flow'rets hill and valley smil'd.
This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdur'd,
And to rebellious fight rallied their powers
Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.
In heavenly spirits could such perverseness dwell ?
But to convince the proud what signs avail,
Or wonders move the obdurate to relent ?
They harden'd more by what might most reclaim,
Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
Took envy : and aspiring to his height,
Stood re-embattled fierce, by force or fraud
Weening to prosper, and at length prevail
Against God and Messiah, or to fall
In universal ruin last ; and now

To final battle drew, disdaining flight,
Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
To all his host on either hand thus spake:
Stand still in bright array, ye saints, here stand
Ye angels arm'd, this day from battle rest;
Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause,
And as ye have receiv'd, so have ye done
Invincibly; but of this cursed crew
The punishment to other hand belongs;
Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints:
Number to this day's work is not ordain'd,
Nor multitude; stand only and behold
God's indignation on these godless pour'd
By me; not you but me they have despis'd,
Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
Because the Father, t' whom in heav'n supreme
Kingdom and pow'r and glory appertains,
Hath honour'd me according to his will.
Therefore to me their doom he hath assign'd
That they may have their wish, to try with me
In battle which the stronger proves, they all,
Or I alone against them, since by strength
They measure all, of other excellence
Not emulous, nor care who them excels;
Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.
So spake the Son, and into terror chang'd
His count'nance too severe to be beheld,
And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
At once the four spread out their starry wings
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot roll'd, as with the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host.
He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels
The steadfast empyrean shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arriv'd, in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent

Before him, such as in their souls infix'd
Plagues ; they astonish'd all resistance lost,
All courage : down their idle weapons dropt ;
O'er shields and helms and helmed heads he rode
Of thrones and mighty seraphim prostrate,
That wish'd the mountains now might be again
Thrown on them as a shelter from his ire.
Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
His arrows, from the four-fold visag'd four
Distinct with eyes and from the living wheels
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes ;
One spirit in them rul'd, and every eye
Glar'd lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
Among th' accurs'd, that wither'd all their strength,
And of their wonted vigour left them drain'd,
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n.
Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
His thunder in mid volley : for he meant
Not to destroy, but root them out of heav'n :
The overthrown he rais'd, and as a herd
Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd
Drove them before him thunderstruck, pursued
With terrors and with furies to the bounds
And crystal wall of heav'n, which opening wide,
Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclos'd
Into the wasteful deep ; the monstrous sight
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
Urg'd them behind ; headlong themselves they threw
Down from the verge of heaven ; eternal wrath
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.

Hell heard th' unsufferable noise, hell saw
Heav'n ruining from heav'n, and would have fled
Affrighted ; but strict fate had cast too deep
Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound.
Nine days they fell ; confounded Chaos roar'd,
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
Encumber'd him with ruin : hell at last
Yawning receiv'd them whole, and on them clos'd ;

Hell their fit habitation fraught with fire
Unquenchable, the house of wo and pain.
Disburden'd heav'n rejoic'd, and soon repair'd
Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd.
Sole victor from the expulsion of his foes
Messiah his triumphal chariot turn'd :
To meet him all his saints, who silent stood
Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
With jubilee advanc'd : and as they went,
Shaded with branching palm, each order bright,
Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion giv'n
Worthiest to reign : he celebrated rode
Triumphant through mid heav'n into the courts
And temple of his mighty Father thron'd
On high ; who into glory him receiv'd
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.

Thus measuring things in heav'n by things on earth,
At thy request, and that thou may'st beware
By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd
What might have else to human race been hid ;
The discord which befel, and war in heav'n
Among th' angelic pow'rs, and the deep fall
Of those too high aspiring, who rebell'd
With satan ; he who envies now thy state,
Who now is plotting how he may seduce
Thee also from obedience, that with him
Bereav'd of happiness thou may'st partake
His punishment, eternal misery ;
Which would be all his solace and revenge,
As a despite done against the most High,
Thee once to gain companions of his wo.
But listen not to his temptations, warn
Thy weaker ; let it profit thee t' have heard
By terrible example the reward
Of disobedience ; firm they might have stood,
Yet fell ; remember, and fear to transgress.

THE
SEVENTH BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

RAPHAEL, at the request of Adam, relates how and wherefore this world was first created : that God, after the expelling of Satan and his angels out of Heaven, declared his pleasure to create another world and other creatures to dwell therein ; sends his Son with glory and attendance of angels, to perform the work of creation in six days : the angels celebrate with hymns the performance thereof, and his re-ascension into Heaven.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VII.

DESCEND from heav'n, Urania, by that name,
If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
Following, above th' Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasean wing.
The meaning, not the name I call : for thou
Nor of the muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st, but heav'nly born,
Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of th' almighty Father, pleas'd
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee
Into the Heav'n of heav'ns I have presum'd,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
Thy temp'ring ; with like safety guided down
Return to me my native element :
Lest from this flying steed unrein'd (as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime,)
Dismounted, on th' Aleian field I fall
Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn.
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
Within the visible diurnal sphere ;
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchang'd
To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days,

On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues ;
In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
And solitude : yet not alone, while thou
Visit'st my slumbers, nightly, or when morn
Purples the east : still govern thou my song,
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
Both harp and voice ; nor could the Muse defend
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores :
For thou art heav'nly, she an empty dream.

Say, goddess what ensued when Raphael,
The affable arch-angel, had forewarn'd
Adam by dire example to beware
Apostacy, by what befel in heav'n
To those apostates, lest the like befal
In Paradise to Adam or his race,
Charg'd not to touch the interdicted tree,
If they transgress, and slight that sole command,
So easily obey'd amid the choice
Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
Though wand'ring. He with his consorted Eve
The story heard attentive, and was fill'd
With admiration and deep muse, to hear
Of things so high and strange, things to their thought
So unimaginable as hate in heav'n,
And war so near the peace of God in bliss
With such confusion : but the evil soon
Driv'n back redounded as a flood on those
From whom it sprung, impossible to mix
With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repeal'd
The doubts that in his heart arose : and now
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
What nearer might concern him, how this world
Of heav'n and earth conspicuous first began,
When and whereof created, for what cause,

What within Eden or without was done
Before his memory, as one whose drought
Yet scarce allay'd, still eyes the current stream,
Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,
Proceeded thus to ask his heav'nly guest :

Great things, and full of wonder in our ears,
Far differing from this world thou hast reveal'd,
Divine interpreter, by favour sent
Down from the empyrean to forewarn
Us timely of what might else have been our loss,
Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach •
For which to th' infinitely Good we owe
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
Receive with solemn purpose to observe
Immutably his sov'reign will, the end
Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsaf'd
Gently for our instruction to impart
Things above earthly thought, which yet concern'd
Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seem'd,
Deign to descend now lower, and relate
What may no less perhaps avail to know,
How first began this heav'n which we behold
Distant so high, with moving fires adorn'd
Innumerable, and this which yields or fills
All space, the ambient air wide interfus'd
Embracing round this floral earth, what cause
Mov'd the Creator in his holy rest
Through all eternity so late to build
In Chaos, and the work begun, how soon
Absolv'd, if unforbid thou mayst unfold
What we, not to explore the secrets ask
Of his eternal empire, but the more
o magnify his works, the more we know.
And the great light of day yet wants to run
Much of his race though steep; suspense in heav'n,
Held by thy voice, thy potent voice he hears,
And longer will delay to hear thee tell
His generation, and the rising birth
Of nature from the unnapparent deep :

Or if the star of evening and the moon
Haste to thy audience, night with her will bring
Silence, and sleep list'ning to thee will watch,
Or we can bid his absence, till thy song
End and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.

Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought :
And thus the godlike angel answer'd mild :
This also thy request with caution ask'd,
Obtain : though to recount almighty works,
What words or tongue of seraph can suffice,
Or heart of man suffice to comprehend ?
Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve
To glorify the Maker, and infer
Thee also happier, shalt not be withheld
Thy hearing, such commission from above
I have receiv'd, to answer thy desire
Of knowledge within bounds ; beyond abstain
To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope
Things not reveal'd, which th' invisible King,
Only omniscient, hath suppress'd in night,
To none communicable in earth or heav'n :
Enough is left besides to search and know.
But knowledge is as food, and needs no less
Her temp'rance over appetite, to know
In measure what the mind may well contain ;
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.
Know then, that after Lucifer from heav'n
(So call him, brighter once amidst the host
Of angels, than that star the stars among,)
Fell with his flaming legions through the deep
Into his place, and the great Son return'd
Victorious with his saints, th' omnipotent
Eternal Father from his throne beheld
Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake :

At last our envious foe hath fail'd, who thought,
All like himself rebellious, by whose aid
This inaccessible high strength, the seat
Of Deity supreme, us dispossess'd,

He trusted to have seiz'd, and into fraud
Drew many, whom their place knows here no more ;
Yet far the greater part have kept, I see,
Their station, heav'n yet populous retains
Number sufficient to possess her realms
Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
With ministeries due, and solemn rites :
But lest his heart exalt him in the harm
Already done, to have dispeopled heav'n,
My damage fondly deem'd, I can repair
'That detriment, if such it be to lose
Self-lost, and in a moment will create
Another world, out of one man a race
Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
Not here, till by degrees of merit rais'd,
They open to themselves at length the way
Up hither, under long obedience try'd,
And earth be chang'd to heav'n, and heav'n to earth
One kingdom, joy and union without end.
Meanwhile inhabit lax, ye pow'rs of heav'n,
And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee
This I perform, speak thou, and be it done :
My overshadowing spirit and might with thee
I send along ; ride forth, and bid the deep
Within appointed bounds be heav'n and earth,
Boundless the deep, because I am who fill
Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.
Though I uncircumscrib'd myself retire,
And put not forth my goodness, which is free
To act or not, necessity and chance
Approach not me, and what I will is fate.

So spake th' Almighty, and to what he spake,
His Word, the filial Godhead, gave effect.
Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
Than time or motion, but to human ears
Cannot without process of speech be told,
So told as earthly notion can receive.
Great triumph and rejoicing was in heav'n,
When such was heard declar'd th' Almighty's will ;

Glory they sung to the most High, good will
To future men, and in their dwellings peace :
Glory to him, whose just avenging ire
Had driven out th' ungodly from his sight,
And th' habitations of the just ; to him
Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordain'd
Good out of evil to create, instead
Of spirits malign a better race to bring
Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse
His good to worlds and ages infinite.

So sang the hierarchies : meanwhile the Son
On his great expedition now appear'd,
Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crown'd
Of majesty divine ; sapience and love
Immense, and all his Father in him shone.
About his chariot numberless were pour'd
Cherub and seraph, potentates and thrones,
And virtues, wing'd spirits, and chariots wing'd
From th' armoury of God, where stand of old
Myriads between two brazen mountains lodg'd
Against a solemn day, harness'd at hand,
Celestial equipage ; and now came forth
Spontaneous, for within them spirits liv'd,
Attendant on their Lord : heav'n open'd wide
Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound
On golden hinges moving, to let forth
The King of Glory in his pow'rful word
And spirit coming to create new worlds.
On heav'nly ground they stood, and from the shore
They view'd the vast immeasurable abyss,
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
And surging waves, as mountains, to assault
Heav'n's height, and with the centre mix the pole.
Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou deep, peace,
Said then th' omnific Word, your discord end :
Nor stay'd, but on the wings of cherubim
Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
Far into Chaos, and the world unborn ;

For Chaos heard his voice : him all his train
Follow'd in bright procession to behold
Creation, and the wonders of his might.
Then stay'd the fervid wheels, and in his hand
He took the golden compasses, prepar'd
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
This universe, and all created things :
One foot he centred, and the other turn'd
Round through the vast profundity obscure,
And said Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
This be thy just circumference, O world ;
Thus God the heav'n created, thus the earth,
Matter unform'd and void ; darkness profound
Cover'd th' abyss : but on the wat'ry calm
His brooding wings the spirit of God outspread,
And vital virtue infus'd, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid mass, but downward purg'd
The black tartareous cold, infernal dregs
Adverse to life : then founded, then conglob'd
Like things to like, the rest to several place
Disparted, and between spun out the air,
And earth self-balanc'd on her centre hung.

Let there be light, said God, and forthwith light
Etherial first, of things, quintessence pure,
Sprung from the deep, and from her native east
To journey the airy gloom began,
Spher'd in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
Was not ; she in a cloudy tabernacle
Sojourn'd the while. God saw the light was good ;
And light from darkness by the hemisphere
Divided : light the day, and darkness, night
He nam'd. Thus was the first day ev'n and morn ;
Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung
By the celestial choirs, when orient light
Exhaling first from darkness they beheld ;
Birth-day of heav'n and earth ; with joy and shout
The hollow universal orb they fill'd,
And touch'd their golden harps, and hymning prais'd

God and his works, Creator him they sung,
Both when first evening was, and when first morn.

Again, God said, let there be firmament
Amid the waters, and let it divide
The waters from the waters : and God made
The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,
Transparent, elemental air, diffus'd
In circuit to the uttermost convex
Of this great round : partition firm and sure,
The waters underneath from those above
Dividing : for as earth, so he the world
Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide
Crystalline ocean, and the loud misrule
Of Chaos far remov'd, lest fierce extremes
Contiguous might distemper the whole frame .
And heav'n he nam'd the firmament : so even
And morning chorus sung the second day.

The earth was form'd, but in the womb as yet
Of waters, embryo immature involv'd,
Appear'd not : over all the face of earth
Main ocean flow'd, not idle, but with warm
Prolific humour soft'ning all her globe,
Fermented the great mother to conceive,
Sate with genial moisture, when God said,
Be gather'd now ye waters under heav'n
Into one place, and let dry land appear.
Immediately the mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky :
So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
Capacious bed of waters : thither they
Hasted with glad precipitance, uproll'd
As drops on dust conglobing from the dry ;
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
For haste : such flight the great command impress'd
On the swift floods : as armies at the call
Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
Troop to their standard, so the wat'ry throng,

Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill,
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
With serpent error wand'ring, found their way,
And on the washy ooze deep channels wore;
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
All but within those banks, where rivers now
Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
The dry land, earth, and the great receptacle
Of congregated waters he call'd seas:
And saw that it was good, and said, Let th' earth
Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed,
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
Whose seed is in herself upon the earth.
He scarce had said, when the bare earth, till then
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
Her universal face with pleasant green,
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flow'r'd
Opening their various colours, and made gay
Her bosom, smelling sweet: and these scarce blown,
Forth flourish'd thick the clust'ring vine, forth crept
The smelling gourd, up stood the corny reed
Embattled in her field; and th' humble shrub,
And bush with frizzled hair implicit; last
Rose as in dance the stately trees, and spread
Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemm'd
Their blossoms: with high woods the hills were
crown'd,

With tufts the valley and each fountain side,
With borders long the rivers: that earth now
Seem'd like to heav'n, a seat where gods might dwell
Or wander with delight, and love to haunt
Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rain'd
Upon the earth, and man to till the ground
None was, but from the earth a dewy mist
Went up and water'd all the ground, and each
Plant of the field, which ere it was in th' earth

God made, and every herb, before it grew
On the green stem ; God saw that it was good :
So ev'n and morn recorded the third day.

Again the Almighty spake, Let there be lights
High in th' expanse of heaven to divide
The day from night ; and let them be for signs,
For seasons, and for days, and circling years,
And let them be for lights as I ordain
Their office in the firmament of heav'n
To give light on the earth ; and it was so.
And God made two great lights, great for their use
To man, the greater to have rule by day,
The less by night altern : and made the stars,
And set them in the firmament of heav'n
T' illuminate the earth, and rule the day
In their vicissitude, and rule the night,
And light from darkness to divide. God saw,
Surveying his great work, that it was good :
For of celestial bodies, first the sun
A mighty sphere he fram'd, unlightsome first,
Though of ethereal mould : then form'd the moon
Globose, and every magnitude of stars,
And sow'd with stars the heav'n thick as a field ;
Of light by far the greater part he took,
Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and plac'd
In the sun's orb, made porous to receive
And drink the liquid light, firm to retain
Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light.
Hither as to their fountain other stars
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light,
And hence the morning planet gilds her horns ;
By tincture or reflection they augment
Their small peculiar, though from human sight
So far remote, with diminution seen.
First in his east the glorious lamp was seen,
Regent of day, and all th' horizon round
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
His longitude through heav'n's high road ; the grey
Dawn and the Pleiades before him danc'd,

Shedding sweet influence ; less bright the moon,
But opposite in level'd west was set
His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
From him, for other light she needed none
In that aspect, and still that distance keeps
Till night, then in the east her turn she shines,
Revolv'd on heav'n's great axle, and her reign
With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
With thousand thousands stars, that then appear'd
Spangling the hemisphere : then first adorn'd
With their bright luminaries that set and rose,
Glad evening and glad morn crown'd the fourth day.

And God said, Let the waters generate
Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul :
And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
Display'd on th' open firmament of heav'n.
And God created the great whales, and each
Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
The waters generated by their kinds,
And every bird of wing after his kind ;
And saw that it was good, and bless'd them saying,
Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas
And lakes and running streams the waters fill :
And let the fowl be multiply'd on th' earth.
Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals
Of fish that with their fins and shining scales
Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft
Bank the mid sea : part single or with mate
Graze the sea weed their pasture, and through groves
Of coral stray, or sporting with quick glance
Show to the sun their wav'd coats dropt with gold
Or in their pearly shells at ease, attend
Moist nutriment, or under rocks their food
In jointed armour watch : on smooth the seal,
And bended dolphins play : part huge of bulk
Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait
Tempest the ocean : there leviathan,
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep

Stretch'd like a promontory, sleeps or swims,
And seems a moving land, and at his gills
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out a sea.
Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens and shores
Their brood as numerous hatch, from th' egg that soon
Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclos'd
Their callow young, but feather'd soon and fledge
They summ'd their pens,* and soaring the air sub-
lime

With clang despis'd the ground, under a cloud
In prospect ; there the eagle and the stork
On cliffs and cedar tops their eyries build :
Part loosely wing the region, part more wise
In common, rang'd in figure, wedge their ways
Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
Their airy caravan high over seas
Flying, and over lands with mutual wing
Easing their flight ; steers the prudent crane
Her annual voyage, borne on winds ; the air
Floats as they pass, fann'd with unnumber'd plumes :
From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
Solac'd the woods, and spread their painted wings
Till ev'n, nor then the solemn nightingale
Ceas'd warbling, but all night tun'd her soft lays :
Others on silver lakes and rivers bath'd
Their downy breast ; the swan with arched neck
Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
Her state with oary feet ; yet oft they quit
The dank, and rising on stiff pennons, tower
The mid aerial sky : others on ground
Walk'd firm ; the crested cock whose clarion sounds
The silent hours, and th' other whose gay train
Adorns him, colour'd with the florid hue
Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
With fish replenish'd, and the air with fowl,
Evening and morn solemniz'd the fifth day.
The sixth, and of creation last, arose

* "Summ'd their pens : " had their quills mature or full grown.

With evening harps and matin, when God said,
Let th' earth bring forth soul living in her kind,
Cattle and creeping things, and beast of th' earth,
Each in their kind. The earth obey'd and straight
Opening her fertile womb teem'd at a birth
Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms,
Limb'd and full grown : out of the ground up rose
As from his lair the wild beast where he wons
In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den ;
Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walk'd :
The cattle in the fields and meadows green :
Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.
The grassy clods now calv'd, now half appear'd
The tawny lion, pawing to get free
His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds,
And rampant shakes his brinded mane ; the ounce,
The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole
Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
In hillocks : the swift stag from under ground
Bore up his branching head : scarce from his mould
Behemoth biggest born of earth upheav'd
His vastness : fleec'd the flocks and bleating rose
As plants : ambiguous between sea and land
The river horse and scaly crocodile.
At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,
Insect or worm : those wav'd their limber fans
For wings and smallest lineaments exact
In all the liveries deck'd of summer's pride,
With spots of gold and purple, azure and green :
These as a line their long dimension drew,
Streaking the ground with sinuous trace ; not all
Minials of nature ; some of serpent kind,
Wondrous in length and corpulence, involv'd
Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
The parsimonious emmet, provident
Of future, in small room large heart enclos'd,
Pattern of just equality perhaps
Hereafter, join'd in her popular tribes

Of commonalty : swarming next appear'd
The female bee, that feeds her husband drone
Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
With honey stor'd : the rest are numberless,
And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them
names,

Needless to thee repeated ; nor unknown
The serpent subtlest beast of all the field,
Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
And hairy mane terrific, though to thee
Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.
Now heav'n in all her glory shone, and roll'd
Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand
First wheel'd their course ; earth in her rich attire
Consummate lovely smil'd ; air, water, earth,
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walk'd
Frequent ; and of the sixth day yet remain'd ;
There wanted yet the master work, the end
Of all yet done ; a creature who not prone
And brute as other creatures, but endued
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and upright with front serene
Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence
Magnanimous to correspond with heav'n,
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends, thither with heart, and voice, and eyes
Directed in devotion, to adore
And worship God supreme, who made him chief
Of all his works : therefore th' Omnipotent
Eternal Father (for where is not he
Present ?) thus to his Son audibly spake :
Let us make now man in our image, man
In our similitude, and let them rule
Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
Beast of the field, and over all the earth,
And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.
This said he form'd thee, Adam, thee, O man,
Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breath'd
The breath of life ; in his own image he

Created thee, in the image of God
Express, and thou becam'st a living soul.
Male he created thee, but thy consort
Female for race; then bless'd mankind, and said,
Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth,
Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold
Over fish of the sea, and fowl of th' air,
And every living thing that moves on th' earth.
Wherever thus created, for no place
Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou know'st,
He brought thee into this delicious grove,
This garden, planted with the trees of God,
Delectable both to behold and taste:
And freely all their pleasant fruit for food
Gave thee; all sorts are here that all th' earth yields,
Variety without end; but of the tree,
Which tasted, works knowledge of good and evil,
Thou may'st not; in the day thou eat'st, thou dy'st;
Death is the penalty impos'd, beware,
And govern well thy appetite, lest Sin
Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.

Here finish'd he, and all that he had made
View'd, and behold all was entirely good;
So ev'n and morn accomplish'd the sixth day:
Yet not till the Creator from his work
Desisting, though unwearied, up return'd,
Up to the heav'n of heav'ns his high abode,
Thence to behold this new created world
Th' addition of his empire, how it show'd
In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
Answering his great idea. Up he rode
Follow'd with acclamation and the sound
Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tun'd
Angelic harmonies: the earth, the air
Resounded, (thou remember'st, for thou heardst,)
The heav'ns and all the constellations rung,
The planets in their station list'ning stood,
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
Open, ye everlasting gates, they sung,

Open, ye heav'ns, your living doors; let in
The great Creator, from his work return'd
Magnificent, his six days work, a world;
Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign
To visit oft the dwellings of just men
Delighted, and with frequent intercourse
Thither will send his winged messengers
On errands of supernal grace. So sung
The glorious train ascending · he through heav'n,
That open'd wide her blazing portals, led
To God's eternal house direct the way,
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold,
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,
Which nightly as a circling zone thou seest
Powder'd with stars. And now on earth the seventh
Evening arose in Eden, for the sun
Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
Forerunning night; when at the holy mount
Of heav'n's high seated top, th' imperial throne
Of Godhead, fix'd for ever firm and sure,
The filial power arriv'd, and sat him down
With his great Father, for he also went
Invisible, yet stay'd (such privilege
Hath Omnipresence,) and the work ordain'd,
Author and end of all things, and from work
Now resting, bless'd and hallow'd the sev'nth day,
As resting on that day from all his work,
But not in silence holy kept; the harp
Had work, and rested not, the solemn pipe,
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
All sounds on fret by string or golden wire
Temper'd soft tunings, intermix'd with voice
Choral or unison; of incense clouds
Fuming from golden censers hid the mount.
Creation and the six days acts they sung,
Great are thy works, Jehovah, infinite
Thy pow'r; what tho't can measure thee or tongue
Relate thee? greater now in thy return

Than from the giant angels ; thee that day
Thy thunders magnified ; but to create
Is greater than created to destroy.
Who can impair thee, mighty King, or bound
Thy empire ? easily the proud attempt
Of spirits apostate and their counsels vain
Thou hast repell'd, while impiously they thought
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
To lessen thee, against his purpose serves
To manifest the more thy might : his evil
Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.
Witness this new-made world, another heav'n
From heav'n gate not far, founded in view
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea ;
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
Of destin'd habitation ; but thou know'st
Their seasons ; among these the seat of men,
Earth with her nether ocean circumfus'd,
Their pleasant dwelling-place, Thrice happy men,
And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanc'd,
Created in his image, there to dwell
And worship him, and in reward to rule
Over his works on earth, in sea, or air,
And multiply a race of worshippers
Holy and just : thrice happy if they know
Their happiness, and persevere upright.
So sung they, and the empyrean rung
With hallelujahs : Thus was sabbath kept.
And thy request think now fulfill'd that ask'd
How first this world and face of things began,
And what before thy memory was done
From the beginning, that posterity
Inform'd by thee might know ; if else thou seek'st
Ought, not surpassing human measure, say !



THE
EIGHTH BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

ADAM inquires concerning celestial motions, is doubtfully answered, and exhorted to search rather things more worthy of knowledge : Adam assents, and still desirous to detain Raphael, relates to him what he remembered since his own creation, his placing in Paradise, his talk with God concerning solitude and fit society, his first meeting and nuptials with Eve, his discourse with the angel thereupon : who after admonitions repeated, departs.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VIII.

THE angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he awhile
Thought him still speaking, still stood fixt to hear;
Then as new wak'd thus gratefully reply'd :

What thanks sufficient, or what recompense
Equal have I to render thee, divine
Historian, who thus largely hast allay'd
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsaf'd
This friendly condescension to relate
Things else by me unsearchable, now heard
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
With glory attributed to the high
Creator? something yet of doubt remains,
Which only thy solution can resolve.

When I behold this goodly frame, this world
Of heav'n and earth consisting, and compute
Their magnitudes, this earth, a spot, a grain,
An atom, with the firmament compar'd
And all her number'd stars, that seem to roll
Spaces incomprehensible (for such
Their distance argues and their swift return
Diurnal,) merely to officiate light
Round this opacious earth, this punctual spot,*

* "This punctual spot:" no bigger than a *point*.

One day and night, in all their vast survey
Useless besides ; reasoning, I oft admire
How nature wise and frugal, could commit
Such disproportions, with superfluous hand
So many nobler bodies to create,
Greater so manifold to this one use,
For ought appears, and on their orbs impose
Such restless revolution day by day
Repeated, while the sedentary earth,
That better might with far less compass move,
Serv'd by more noble than herself, attains
Her end without least motion, and receives,
As tribute, such a sumless journey brought
Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light ;
Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails.

So spake our sire, and by his count'nance seem'd
Ent'ring on studious thoughts abstruse, which Eve
Perceiving where she sat retir'd in sight,
With lowliness majestic from her seat,
And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flow'rs
To visit how they prosper'd, bud and bloom,
Her nursery : they at her coming sprung,
And touch'd by her fair tendance gladlier grew.
Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
Delighted, or not capable her ear
Of what was high : such pleasure she reserv'd,
Adam relating, she sole auditress :
Her husband the relator she preferr'd
Before the angel, and of him to ask
Chose rather ; he, she knew, would intermix
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
With conjugal caresses ; from his lip
Not words alone pleas'd her. O when meet now
Such pairs, in love and mutual honour join'd ?
With goddess-like demeanour forth she went,
Not unattended, for on her as queen
A pomp of winning graces waited still,
And from about her shot darts of desire

Into all eyes to wish her still in sight.
And Raphael now to Adam doubt propos'd
Benevolent and facile thus reply'd :

To ask or search I blame thee not, for heav'n
Is as the book of God before thee set
Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years :
This to attain, whether heav'n move, or earth,
Imports not, if thou reckon right ; the rest
From man or angel the great Architect
Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought
Rather admire ; or if they list to try
Conjecture, he his fabric of the heav'n's
Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
His laughter at their quaint opinions wide.
Hereafter, when they come to model heav'n
And calculate the stars, how they will wield
The mighty frame, how build, unbuild, contrive
To save appearances, how gird the sphere
With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er,
Cycle and epicle, orb in orb :
Already by thy reasoning this I guess,
Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest
That bodies bright and greater should not serve
The less not bright, nor heav'n such journeys run,
Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
The benefit : consider first, that great
Or bright infers not excellence : the earth
Though, in comparison of heav'n, so small,
Nor glist'ring, may of solid good contain
More plenty than the sun that barren shines,
Whose virtue on itself works no effect,
But in the fruitful earth ; there first receiv'd
His beams, unactive else, their vigour find.
Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries
Officious, but to thee, earth's habitant.
And for the heav'n's wide circuit, let it speak
The Maker's high magnificence, who built

So spacious, and his line stretch'd out so far ;
That man may know he dwells not in his own ;
An edifice too large for him to fill,
Lodg'd in a small partition, and the rest
Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best known.
The swiftness of those circles attribute,
Though numberless, to his omnipotence
That to corporeal substances could add
Speed almost spiritual ; me thou think'st not slow,
Who since the morning hour set out from heav'n
Where God resides, and ere mid-day arriv'd
In Eden, distance inexpressible
By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
Admitting motion in the heav'ns, to show,
Invalid that which thee to doubt is mov'd :
Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
To thee who hast thy dwelling here on earth.
God to remove his ways from human sense,
Plac'd heav'n from earth so far, that earthly sight,
If it presume, might err in things too high,
And no advantage gain. What if the sun
Be centre to the world, and other stars
By his attractive virtue and their own
Incited, dance about him various rounds ?
Their wand'ring course now high, now low, then hid,
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
In six thou seest, and what if sev'nth to these
The planet earth, so steadfast though she seem,
Insensibly three different motions move ?
Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
Mov'd contrary with thwart obliquities,
Or save the sun his labour, and that swift
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb suppos'd,
Invisible else above all stars, the wheel
Of day and night ; which needs not thy belief
If earth industrious of herself fetch day
Travelling east, and with her part averse
From the sun's beam meet night, her other part
Still luminous by his ray. What if that light

Sent from her through the wide transpicious air,
To the terrestrial moon be as a star
Enlight'ning her by day, as she by night
This earth? reciprocal, if land be there,
Fields and inhabitants; her spots thou seest
As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
Fruits in her soften'd soil, for some to eat
Allotted there: and other suns perhaps
With their attendant moons thou wilt descry,
Communicating male and female light,
Which two great sexes animate the world,
Stor'd in each orb perhaps with some that live.
For such vast room in nature unpossess'd
By living soul, desert and desolate,
Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute
Each orb a glimpse of light, convey'd so far
Down to this habitable, which returns
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.
But whether thus these things, or whether not,
Whether the sun predominant in heav'n,
Rise on the earth, or earth rise on the sun,
He from the east his flaming road begin,
Or she from west her silent course advance
With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps
On her soft axle, while she paces even,
And bears thee soft with the smooth air along,
Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid,
Leave them to God above, him serve and fear;
Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
Wherever plac'd, let him dispose: joy thou
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
And thy fair Eve; heav'n is for thee too high
To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
Think only what concerns thee and thy being;
Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
Live, in what state, condition or degree,
Contented that thus far hath been reveal'd
Not of earth only, but of highest heav'n.

To whom thus Adam, clear'd of doubt, reply'd:
How fully hast thou satisfy'd me, pure
Intelligence of heav'n, angel serene,
And freed from intricacies, taught to live
The easiest way, nor with perplexing thoughts
To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
And not molest us, unless we ourselves
Seek them with wand'ring tho'ts, and notions vain.
But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end;
Till warn'd or by experience taught, she learn,
That not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom; what is more, is fume,
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
And renders us in things that most concern
Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.
Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
Useful, whence haply mention may arise
Of something not unseasonable to ask
By sufferance, and thy wonted favour deign'd.
Thee have I heard relating what was done
Ere my remembrance: now hear me relate
My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard;
And day is not yet spent; till then thou seest
How subtly to detain thee I devise,
Inviting thee to hear while I relate,
Fond, where it not in hope of thy reply:
For while I sit with thee, I seem in heav'n,
And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
Than fruits of palm-tree, pleasantest to thirst
And hunger both, from labour, at the hour
Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill
Though pleasant, but thy words with grace divine
Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.

To whom thus Raphael answer'd heav'nly meek:
Nor are thy lips ungrateful, sire of men,
Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd,
Inward and outward both, his image fair:
Speaking, or mute, all comeliness and grace
Attends thee, and each word, each motion forms;
Nor less think we in heav'n, of thee on earth
Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire
Gladly into the ways of God with man:
For God we see hath honour'd thee, and set
On man his equal love: say therefore on:
For I that day was absent, as befel,
Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure,
Far on excursion toward the gates of hell;
Squar'd in full legion (such command we had)
To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
Or enemy, while God was in his work,
Lest he incens'd at such eruption bold,
Destruction with creation might have mix'd.
Not that they durst without his leave attempt,
But us he sends upon his high behests
For state, as Sov'reign King, and to inure
Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut
The dismal gates, and barricado'd strong;
But long ere our approaching, heard within
Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
Glad we return'd up to the coast of light
Ere sabbath evening: so we had in charge.
But thy relation now; for I attend,
Pleas'd with thy words no less than thou with mine.

So spake the God-like pow'r, and thus our sire:
For man to tell how human life began
Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
Desire with thee still longer to converse
Induc'd me. As new wak'd from soundest sleep,
Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid
In balmy sweat, which with his beams the sun

Soon dry'd, and on the reeking moisture fed.
Straight toward heav'n my wond'ring eyes I turn'd
And gaz'd awhile the ample sky, till rais'd
By quick instinctive motion up I sprung,
As thitherward endeavouring, and upright
Stood on my feet; about me round I saw
Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
And liquid lapse of murm'ring streams: by these,
Creatures that liv'd and mov'd, and walk'd, or flew,
Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil'd
With fragrance, and with joy my heart o'erflow'd.
Myself I then perus'd, and limb by limb
Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
With supple joints, as lively vigour led:
But who I was, or where, or from what cause,
Knew not; to speak I try'd, and forthwith spake;
My tongue obey'd, and readily could name
Whate'er I saw. Thou Sun, said I, fair light,
And thou enlighten'd earth, so fresh and gay,
Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains,
And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
Till, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?
No of myself; by some great Maker then,
In goodness and in pow'r pre-eminent;
Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,
From whom I have that thus I move and live,
And feel that I am happier than I know.
While thus I call'd, and stray'd I knew not whither
From where I first drew air, and first beheld
This happy light, when answer none return'd,
On a green shady bank profuse of flowers,
Pensive I sat me down; there gentle sleep
First found me, and with soft oppression seiz'd
My drowsed sense, untroubled, though I thought
I then was passing to my former state
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
Whose inward apparition gently mov'd
My fancy to believe I yet had being,

And liv'd : one came, methought, of shape divine,
And said, Thy mansion wants thee, Adam, rise,
First man, of men innumerable ordain'd
First father, call'd by thee I come thy guide
To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepar'd.
So saying, by the hand he took me rais'd,
And over fields and waters, as in air
Smooth sliding without step, last led me up
A woody mountain, whose high top was plain ;
A circuit wide, enclos'd, with goodliest trees
Planted, with walks, and bow'rs, that what I saw
Of earth before scarce pleasant seem'd. Each tree
Loaden with fairest fruit, that hung to th' eye
Tempting, stirr'd in me sudden appetite
To pluck and eat ; whereat I wak'd, and found
Before mine eyes all real, as the dream
Had lively shadow'd : here had new begun
My wand'ring, had not he who was my guide
Up hither, from among the trees appear'd,
Presence divine. Rejoicing, but with awe
In adoration at his feet I fell
Submit : he rear'd me, and Whom thou sought'st

I am,

Said mildly, Author of all this thou seest
Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat :
Of every tree that in the garden grows
Eat freely with glad heart ; fear here no dearth :
But of the tree whose operation brings
Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set
The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,
Amid the garden by the tree of life,
Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,
And shun the bitter consequence : for know,
The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
Transgress'd, inevitably thou shalt die,
From that day mortal, and this happy state
Shalt lose, expell'd from hence into a world

Of wo and sorrow. Sternly he pronounc'd
The rigid interdiction, which resounds
Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice
Not to incur : but soon his clear aspect
Return'd, and gracious purpose thus renew'd :
Not only these fair bounds, but all the earth
To thee and to thy race I give ; as lords
Possess it, and all things that therein live,
Or live in sea, or air, beast, fish, and fowl.
In sign whereof each bird and beast behold
After their kind ; I bring them to receive
From thee their names ; and pay thee fealty
With low subjection, understand the same
Of fish within their wat'ry residence,
Not hither summon'd, since they cannot change
Their element to draw the thinner air.
As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold
Approaching two and two, these cowering low
With blandishment, each bird stoop'd on his wing.
I nam'd them, as they pass'd, and understood
Their nature, with such knowledge God endued
My sudden apprehension : but in these
I found not what methought I wanted still ;
And to the heav'nly vision thus presum'd :

O by what name, for thou above all these,
Above mankind, or ought than mankind higher,
Surpassest far my naming, how may I
Adore thee, Author of this universe,
And all this good to man ? for whose well being
So amply, and with hands so liberal
Thou hast provided all things : but with me
I see not who partakes. In solitude
What happiness, who can enjoy alone,
Or all enjoying, what contentment find ?
Thus I presumptuous ; and the vision bright,
As with a smile more brighten'd, thus reply'd :

What call'st thou solitude ? is not the earth
With various living creatures, and the air
Replenish'd, and all these at thy command

To come and play before thee ? know'st thou not
Their language and their ways ? they also know,
And reason not contemptibly ; with these
Find pastime, and bear rule ; thy realm is large.
So spake the universal Lord, and seem'd
So ord'ring. I with leave of speech implor'd,
And humble deprecation thus reply'd :

Let not my words offend thee, heav'nly Power,
My Maker, be propitious while I speak.
Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
And these inferior far beneath me set ?
Among unequals what society
Can sort, what harmony or true delight ?
Which must be mutual, in proportion due
Giv'n and receiv'd ; but in disparity
The one intense, the other still remiss
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
Tedious alike : of fellowship I speak
Such as I see, fit to participate
All rational delight, wherein the brute
Cannot be human consort : they rejoice
Each with their kind, lion with lioness ;
So fitly them in pairs thou hast combin'd :
Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl
So well converse, nor with the ox the ape ;
Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.

Whereto th' Almighty answer'd, not displeas'd :
A nice and subtle happiness I see
Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice
Of thy associates, Adam, and wilt taste
No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
What think'st thou then of me, and this my state ?
Seem I to thee sufficiently possess'd
Of happiness, or not ? who am alone
From all eternity, for none I know
Second to me or like, equal much less.
How have I then with whom to hold converse
Save with the creatures which I made, and those

To me inferior, infinite descents
Beneath what other creatures are to thee ?

He ceas'd, I lowly answer'd : To attain
The height and depth of thy eternal ways
All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things,
Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee
Is no deficiency found ; not so is man,
But in degree, the cause of his desire
By conversation with his like to help,
Or solace his defects. No need that thou
Should'st propagate, already infinite,
And through all numbers absolute, though one ;
But man by number is to manifest
His single imperfection, and beget
Like of his like, his image multiply'd,
In unity defective, which requires
Collateral love, and dearest amity.
Thou in thy secrecy although alone,
Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not
Social communication, yet so pleas'd,
Canst raise thy creature to what height thou wilt
Of union or communion, deify'd ;
I by conversing cannot these erect
From prone, nor in their ways complacency find.
Thus I embolden'd spake, and freedom us'd
Permissive, and acceptance found, which gain'd
This answer from the gracious voice divine :

Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd,
And find thee knowing not of beasts alone,
Which thou has rightly nam'd, but of thyself,
Expressing well the spirit within thee free,
My image, not imparted to the brute,
Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee,
Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike,
And be so minded still ; I, ere thou spak'st,
Knew it not good for man to be alone,
And no such company as then thou saw'st
Intended thee, for trial only brought,
To see how thou couldst judge of fit and meet •

What next I bring shall please thee, be assur'd,
Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,
Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.

He ended, or I heard no more, for now
My earthly by his heav'nly over-power'd:
Which it had long stood under, strain'd to th' height
In that celestial colloquy sublime,
As with an object that excels the sense,
Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd
By nature as in aid, and clos'd mine eyes.
Mine eyes he clos'd, but open left the cell
Of fancy my internal sight, by which
Abstract as in a trance methought I saw,
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
Still glorious before whom awake I stood;
Who stooping open'd my left side, and took
From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
And life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh fill'd up and heal'd:
The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hand;
Under his forming hands a creature grew,
Manlike but different sex, so lovely fair,
That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd
And in her looks, which from that time infus'd
Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,
And into all things from her air inspir'd
The spirit of love and amorous delight.
She disappear'd, and left me dark; I wak'd
To find her, or for ever to deplore
Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure:
When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd
With what all earth or heav'n could bestow
To make her amiable: on she came,
Led by her heav'nly Maker, though unseen,
And guided by his voice, nor uninform'd
Of nuptial sanctity and marriage rites

Grace was in all her steps, heav'n in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.
I overjoy'd could not forbear aloud :

This turn hath made amends ; thou hast fulfil'd
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
Giver of all things fair, but fairest this
Of all thy gifts, nor enviest. I now see
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself
Before me ; woman is her name, of man
Extracted ; for this cause he shall forego
Father and mother, and to his wife adhere ;
And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.

She heard me thus, and though divinely brought,
Yet innocence and virgin modesty,
Her virtue and the conscience of her worth,
That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won,
Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retir'd,
The more desirable, or to say all,
Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
Wrought in her so, that seeing me, she turn'd ;
I follow'd her, she what was honour knew,
And with obsequious majesty approved
My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower
I led her blushing like the morn : all heav'n,
And happy constellations on that hour
Shed their selectest influence ; the earth
Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill ;
Joyous the birds ; fresh gales and gentle airs
Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening star
On his hill top, to light the bridal harp.

Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
My story to the sum of earthly bliss
Which I enjoy, and must confess to find
In all things else delight indeed, but such
As us'd or not, works in the mind no change,
Nor vehement desire, these delicacies

I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flow'rs,
Walks, and the melody of birds ; but here
Far otherwise, transported I behold,
Transported touch ; here passion first I felt,
Commotion strange, in all enjoyment else
Superior and unmov'd, here only weak
Against the charm of beauty's pow'rful glance
Or nature fail'd in me, and left some part
Not proof enough such object to sustain,
Or from my side subducting, took perhaps
More than enough ; at least on her bestow'd
Too much of ornament, in outward show
Elaborate, of inward less exact.
For well I understand in the prime end
Of nature her th' inferior, in the mind
And inward faculties, which most excel,
In outward also her resembling less
His image who made both, and less expressing
The character of that dominion given
O'er other creatures ; yet when I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute* she seems
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best ;
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded, wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discount'nanc'd, and like folly shows ;
Authority and reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally ; and to consummate all,
Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her as a guard angelic plac'd.

To whom the angel with contracted brow :
Accuse not nature, she hath done her part ;
Do thou but thine, and be not diffident
Of wisdom, she deserts thee not, if thou

* " So absolute ;" finished.

Dismiss not her, when most thou needst her nigh,
By attributing overmuch to things
Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.
For what admir'st thou, what transports thee so,
An outside? fair no doubt, and worthy well
Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love,
Not thy subjection; weigh with her thyself;
Then value: oft-times nothing profits more
Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right
Well manag'd; of that skill the more thou know'st.
The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
And to realities yield all her shows:
Made so adorn for thy delight the more,
So awful, that with honour thou mayst love
Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
But if the sense of touch whereby mankind
Is propagated seem such dear delight
Beyond all other, think the same vouchsaf'd
To cattle, and each beast; which would not be
To them made common and divulg'd, if ought
Therein enjoy'd were worthy to subdue
The soul of man, or passion in him move.
What higher in her society thou find'st
Attractive, human, rational, love still;
In loving thou dost well, in passion not
Wherein true love consists not; love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat
In reason, and is judicious, is the scale
By which to heav'nly love thou may'st ascend
Not sunk in carnal pleasure, for which cause
Among the beasts no mate for thee was found
To whom thus half abash'd Adam, reply'd ·
Neither her outside form'd so fair, nor aught
In procreation common to all kinds
(Though higher of the genial bed by far,
And with mysterious reverence I deem,)
So much delights me, as those graceful acts,
Those thousand decencies that daily flow
From all her words and actions, mix'd with love

And sweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd
Union of mind, or in us both one soul;
Harmony to behold in wedded pair
More grateful than harmonious sound to th' ear,
Yet these subject not; I to thee disclose
What inward thence I feel, not therefore foil'd,
Who meet with various objects, from the sense
Variously representing; yet still free
Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
To love thou blam'st me not, for love thou say'st
Leads up to heav'n, is both the way and guide:
Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask;
Love not the heav'nly spirits, and how their love
Express they? by looks only, or do they mix
Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?

To whom the angel with a smile that glow'd
Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue,
Answer'd: Let it suffice thee that thou know'st
Us happy, and without love no happiness.
Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st
(And pure thou wert created) we enjoy
In eminence, and obstacle find none,
Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars;
Easier than air with air, if spirits embrace,
Total they mix, union of pure with pure
Desiring; nor restrain'd conveyance need
As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.
But I can now no more; the parting sun
Beyond the earth's green Cape and verdant isles
Hesperian sets, my signal to depart.
Be strong, live happy, and love, but first of all
Him whom to love is to obey, and keep
His great command; take heed lest passion sway
Thy judgment to do aught which else free will
Would not admit; thine and of all thy sons
The weal or wo in thee is plac'd; beware.
I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
And all the blest: stand fast; to stand or fall
Free in thine own arbitrement it lies

Perfect within, no outward aid require;
And all temptation to transgress repel.

So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus
Follow'd with benediction. Since to part,
Go heav'nly guest, ethereal messenger,
Sent from whose sov'reign goodness I adore.
Gentle to me and affable hath been
Thy condescension, and shall be honour'd ever
With grateful memory: thou to mankind
Be good and friendly still, and oft return.

So parted they, the Angel up to heav'n
From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower.

END OF THE EIGHTH BOOK.

THE
NINTH BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

SATAN having compassed the Earth, with meditated guile returns as a mist by night into Paradise, enters into the serpent sleeping. Adam and Eve in the morning go forth to their labours, which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each labouring apart : Adam consents not, alleging the danger, least that enemy, of whom they were forewarned, should attempt her, found alone : Eve loath to be found not circumspect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather desirous to make trial of her strength ; Adam at last yields : the serpent finds her alone ; his subtle approach, first gazing, then speaking, with much flattery extolling Eve above all other creatures. Eve wondering to hear the serpent speak, asks how he attained to human speech, and such understanding not till now ; the serpent answers, that by tasting of a certain tree in the garden, he attained both to speech and reason, till then void of both : Eve requires him to bring her to that tree, and finds it to be the tree of knowledge forbidden : the serpent now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces her at length to eat ; she pleased with the taste, deliberates awhile whether to impart thereof to Adam or not, at last brings him of the fruit, relates what persuaded her to eat thereof : Adam at first amazed, but perceiving her lost, resolves through vehemence of love to perish with her ; and extenuating the trespass, eats also of the fruit ; the effects thereof in them both ; they seek to cover their nakedness ; then fall to variance and accusation of one another.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IX.

No more of talk where God or angel guest
With man, as with his friend, familiar us'd
To sit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repast, permitting him the while
Venial discourse unblam'd : I now must change
Those notes to tragic ; foul distrust, and breach
Disloyal on the part of man, revolt,
And disobedience ; on the part of heav'n
Now alienated, distance and distaste,
Anger and just rebuke, and judgment given
That brought into this world of wo,
Sin and her shadow Death, and Misery,
Death's harbinger : sad task, yet argument
Not less but more heroic than the wrath
Of stern Achilles on his foe pursu'd
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall ; or rage
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd,
Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long
Perplex'd the Greek and Cytherea's son ;
If answerable style I can obtain
Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,
And dictates to me slumb'ring, or inspires
Easy my unpremeditated verse :
Since first this subject for heroic song

Pleas'd me long choosing, and beginning late ;
Not sedulous by nature to indite
Wars, hitherto the only argument
Heroic deem'd, chief mast'ry to dissect
With long and tedious havoc fabled knights
In battles feign'd ; the better fortitude
Of patience and heroic martyrdom
Unsung ; or to describe races and games,
Or tilting furniture, emblazon'd shields,
Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds ;
Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
At joust and tournament ; then marshall'd feast
Serv'd up in hall with sewers, and seneschals ;
The skill of artifice or office mean,
Not that which justly gives heroic name
To person, or to poem. Me of these
Nor skill'd nor studious, higher argument
Remains, sufficient of itself to raise
That name, unless an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years damp my intended wing
Depress'd, and much they may, if all be mine,
Not hers who brings it nightly to my ear.

The sun was sunk, and after him the star
Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter
'Twixt day and night, and now from end to end
Night's hemisphere had veil'd the horizon round :
When Satan who late fled before the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd
In meditated fraud and malice, bent
On man's destruction, maugre what might hap
Of heavier on himself, fearless return'd.
By night he fled, and at midnight return'd.
From compassing the earth, cautious of days,
Since Uriel regent of the sun descry'd
His entrance, and forwarn'd the cherubim
That kept their watch ; thence full of anguish driven,
The space of sev'n continued nights he rode
With darkness, thrice the equinoctial line

He circled, four times cross'd the car of night
From pole to pole, traversing each colure ;
On th' eighth return'd, and on the coast averse
From entrance of cherubic watch, by stealth
Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the
change,

Where Tigris at the foot of Paradise
Into a gulf shot under ground, till part
Rose up a fountain by the tree of life ;
In with the river sunk, and with it rose
Satan, involv'd in rising mist, then sought
Where to lie hid ; sea he had search'd and land
From Eden over Pontus, and the pool
Mæotis, up beyond the river Ob ;
Downward as far antarctic ; and in length
West from Orontes to the ocean barr'd
At Darien, thence to the land where flows
Ganges and Indus : thus the orb he roam'd
With narrow search, and with inspection deep
Consider'd every creature, which of all
Most opportune might serve his wiles, and found
The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.

Him after long debate, irresolute
Of thoughts revolv'd, his final sentence chose
Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide
From sharpest sight : for in the wily snake,
Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,
As from his wit and native subtlety
Proceeding, which in other beasts observ'd,
Doubt might beget of diabolic power
Active within beyond the sense of brute.

Thus he resolv'd, but first from inward grief
His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd :

O earth, how like to heav'n, if not preferr'd
More justly, seat worthier of gods, as built
With second thoughts, reforming what was old !
For what God after better worse would build ?

Terrestrial heav'n, danc'd round by other heav'ns
That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
Light above lights, for thee alone, as seems,
In thee concent'ring all their precious beams
Of sacred influence ! As God in heav'n
Is centre, yet extends to all, so thou
Cent'ring receiv'st from all those orbs ; in thee,
Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
Of creatures animate with gradual life
Of growth, sense, reason, all summ'd up in man.
With what delight could I have walk'd thee round,
If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange
Of hill and valley, rivers, woods and plains,
Now land, now sea, and shores with forests crown'd
Rocks, dens, and caves ! but I in none of these
Find place or refuge ; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
Of contraries ; all good to me becomes
Bane, and in heav'n much worse would be my state.
But neither here seek I, no, nor in heav'n
To dwell, unless by mast'ring heav'n's Supreme ;
Nor hope to be myself less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound :
For only in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts ; and him destroy'd,
Or won to what may work his utter loss,
For whom all this was made, all this will soon
Follow, as to him link'd in weal or wo,
In wo then ; that destruction wide may range :
To me shall be the glory sole among
Th' infernal pow'rs, in one day to have marr'd
What th' Almighty styl'd, six nights and days
Continued making, and who knows how long
Before had been contriving, though perhaps
Not longer than since I in one night freed
From servitude inglorious, well nigh half

Th' angelic name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers ; he to be aveng'd,
And to repair his numbers thus impair'd,
Whether such virtue spent of old now fail'd
More angels to create, if they at least
Are his created, or to spite us more,
Determin'd to advance into our room
A creature form'd of earth, and him endow,
Exalted from so base original,
With heav'nly spoils, our spoils, what he decreed
He effected ; man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this world and earth his seat,
Him lord pronounc'd and, O, indignity !
Subjected to his service angel wings.
And flaming ministers to watch and tend
Their earthly charge : of these the vigilance
I dread, and to elude, thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight vapour glide obscure, and pry
In every bush and brake, where hap may find
The serpent sleeping in whose mazy folds
To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
O foul descent ! that I who erst contended
With gods to sit the highest, am now constrain'd
Into a beast, and mix'd with bestial slime
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the height of deity aspir'd ;
But what will not ambition and revenge
Descend to ? who aspires must down as low
As high he soar'd, obnoxious first or last
To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long back on itself recoils ;
Let it ; I reck not, so it light well aim'd,
Since higher I fall short, on him who next
Provokes my envy, this new favourite
Of heav'n, this man of clay, son of despite,
Whom us the more to spite his Maker rais'd
From dust : spite then with spite is best repaid.

So saying, through each thicket dank or dry,
Like a black mist low creeping, he held on

His midnight search, where soonest he might find
The serpent; him fast sleeping soon he found
In labyrinth of many a round self-roll'd,
His head the midst, well stor'd with subtle wiles:
Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den,
Nor nocent yet, but on the grassy herb
Fearless unfear'd he slept: in at his mouth
The devil enter'd, and his brutal sense,
In heart or head, possessing soon inspir'd
With act intelligential; but his sleep
Disturb'd not, waiting close the approach of morn.

Now when as sacred light began to dawn
In Eden on the humid flow'rs, that breath'd
Their morning incense, when all things that breathe
From th' earth's great altar send up silent praise
To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,
And join'd their vocal worship to the choir
Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake
The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs;
Then commune how that day they best may ply
Their growing work: for much their work outgrew
The hands despatch of two gard'ning so wide,
And Eve first to her husband thus began:

Adam, well may we labour, still to dress
This garden, still to tend plant, herb and flower,
Our pleasant task enjoin'd, but till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
Luxurious by restraint; what we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides
Sending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,
Or bear what to my mind first thoughts present:
Let us divide our labours, thou where choice
Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
The woodbine round this arbour, or direct
The clasping ivy where to climb, while I
In yonder spring of roses intermix'd
With myrtle, find what to re-dress till noon:

For while so near each other thus all day
Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
Casual discourse draw on, which intermiss
Our day's work brought to little, though begun
Early, and th' hour of supper comes unearn'd.

To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd :
Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
Compare above all living creatures dear,
Well hast thou motion'd, well thy tho'ts employ'd
How we might best fulfil the work which here
God hath assign'd us, nor of me shalt pass
Unprais'd: for nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to study household good,
And good works in her husband to promote.
Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd
Labour, as to debar us when we need
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
Of looks and smiles, for smiles from reason flow,
To brute deny'd, and are of love the food,
Love not the lowest end of human life.
For not to irksome toil, but to delight
He made us, and delight to reason join'd.
These paths and bow'rs doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist us: but if much converse perhaps
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield:
For solitude sometimes is best society,
And short retirement urges sweet return.
But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
Befal thee sever'd from me; for thou know'st
What hath been warn'd us, what malicious foe
Envyng our happiness, and of his own
Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame
By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
His wish and best advantage, us asunder,

Hopeless to circumvent us join'd, where each
To other speedy aid might lend at need ;
Whether his first design be to withdraw
Our fealty from God, or to disturb
Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more ;
Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side
That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects.
The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
Safest and seemliest, by her husband stays,
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.
To whom the virgin majesty of Eve,
As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
With sweet austere composure thus reply'd :

Offspring of heav'n and earth, and all earth's lord,
That such an enemy we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee inform'd I learn,
And from the parting angel overheard,
As in a shady nook I stood behind,
Just then return'd at shut of evening flowers.
But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
To God or thee, because we have a foe
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
His violence thou fear'st not, being such
As we, not capable of death or pain,
Can either not receive, or can repel.
His fraud is then thy fear, which plain infers
Thy equal fear that my firm faith and love
Can by his fraud be shaken or seduc'd :
Tho'ts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,
Adam, misthought of her to thee so dear ?

To whom with healing words Adam reply'd :
Daughter of God and man, immortal Eve !
For such thou art, from sin and blame entire :
Not diffident of thee do I dissuade
Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
Th' attempt itself, intended by our foe.
For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses
The tempted with dishonour foul, suppos'd

Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
Against temptation: thou thyself with scorn
And anger wouldst resent the offer'd wrong,
Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,
If such affront I labour to avert
From thee alone, which on us both at once
The enemy, though bold will hardly dare,
Or daring, first on me the assault shall light.
Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;
Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce
Angels; nor think superfluous others aid.
I from the influence of thy looks receive
Access in every virtue, in thy sight
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on
Shame to be overcome or overreach'd
Would utmost vigour raise, and rais'd unite.
Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel
When I am present, and thy trial choose
With me, best witness of thy virtue try'd?

So spake domestic Adam in his care
And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought
Less attributed to her faith sincere,
Thus her reply with accent sweet renew'd:

If this be our condition, thus to dwell
In narrow circuit straiten'd by a foe,
Subtle or violent, we not endued
Single with like defence, wherever met,
How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
But harm precedes not sin; only our foe
Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem
Of our integrity: his foul esteem
Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns
Foul on himself; then wherefore shunn'd or fear'd
By us? who rather double honour gain
From his surmise prov'd false, find peace within,
Favour from heav'n, our witness from th' event.
And what is faith, love, virtue unassay'd
Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?

Let us not then suspect our happy state
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single or combin'd.
Frail is our happiness, if this be so,
And Eden were no Eden thus expos'd.

To whom thus Adam fervently reply'd :
O woman, best are all things as the will
Of God ordain'd them ; his creating hand
Nothing imperfect or deficient left
Of all that he created, much less man,
Or ought that might his happy state secure.
Secure from outward force ; within himself
The danger lies, yet lies within his power :
Against his will he can receive no harm.
But God left free the will, for what obeys
Reason is free, and reason he made right,
But bid her well beware, and still erect,
Lest by some fair appearing good surpris'd
She dictate false, and misinform the will
To do what God expressly hath forbid.
Not then mistrust, but tender love enjoins,
That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.
Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve,
Since reason not impossibly may meet
Some specious object by the foe suborn'd,
And fall into deception unaware,
Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warn'd.
Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
Were better, and most likely if from me
Thou sever not : trial will come unsought :
Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve
First thy obedience ; th' other who can know,
Not seeing the attempted, who attest ?
But if thou think, trial unsought may find
Us both securer than thus warn'd thou seem'st,
Go ; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more ;
Go in thy native innocence, rely
On what thou hast of virtue, summon all,
For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine

So spake the patriarch of mankind : But Eve
Persisted, yet submit though last, reply'd :

With thy permission then, and thus forewarn'd
Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
Touch'd only, that our trial, when least sought,
May find us both perhaps far less prepar'd,
The willinger I go, nor much expect
A foe so proud will first the weaker seek ;
So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.

Thus saying, from her husband's hand, her hand
Soft she withdrew, and like a wood-nymph light,
Oread or dryad, or of Delia's train,
Betook her to the groves, but Delia's self
In gait surpass'd, and goddess-like deport,
Though not as she with bow and quiver arm'd,
But with such gard'ning tools as art yet rude,
Guiltless of fire, had form'd, or angels brought.
To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorn'd,
Likest she seem'd Pomona when she fled
Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,
Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
Her, long with ardent look his eye pursu'd
Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
Oft he to her his charge of quick return
Repeated, she to him as oft engag'd
To be return'd by noon amid the bower,
And all things in best order to invite
Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose ;
O much deceiv'd, much failing, hapless Eve,
Of thy presum'd return ! event perverse !
Thou never from that hour in Paradise
Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose ;
Such ambush hid among sweet flow'rs and shades
Waited with hellish rancour imminent
To intercept thy way, or send thee back
Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss.
For now, and since first break of dawn the fiend,
Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come,
And on his quest, where likeliest he might find

The only two of mankind, but in them
The whole included race, his purpos'd prey.
In bow'r and field he sought, where any tuft
Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
Their tendance or plantation for delight;
By fountain or by shady rivulet
He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
Eve separate, he wish'd, but not with hope
Of what so seldom chanc'd, when to his wish,
Beyond his hope; Eve separate he spies,
Veil'd in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
Half spy'd, so thick the roses blushing round
About her glow'd, oft stooping to support
Each flow'r of tender stalk, whose head though gay
Carnation, purple, azure, or speck'd with gold
Hung drooping unsustain'd; them she upstays
Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
Nearer he drew, and many a walk travers'd
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm,
Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen
Among thick-woven arborets and flowers,
Imbordered on each bank, the hand of Eve:
Spot more delicious than those gardens feign'd,
Or of reviv'd Adonis, or renown'd
Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son,
Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.
Much he the place admir'd, the person more.
As one who long in populous city pent,
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
Forth issuing on a summer's morn to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight,
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
If chance with nymph-like step fair virgin pass,
What pleasing seem'd, for her now pleases more,

She most, and in her look sums all delight :
Such pleasure took the serpent to behold
This flow'ry plat, the sweet recess of Eve
Thus early, thus alone ; her heav'nly form
Angelic, but more soft, and feminine ;
Her graceful innocence, her every air
Of gesture, or least action overaw'd
His malice, and with repine sweet bereav'd
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought :
That space the evil-one abstracted stood
From his own evil, and for the time remain'd
Stupidly good, of enmity disarm'd,
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge :
But the hot hell that always in him burns,
Though in mid heav'n, soon ended his delight,
And tortures him now more, the more he sees
Of pleasure not for him ordain'd ; then soon
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites :

Tho'ts, whither have ye led me ! with what sweet
Compulsion thus transported to forget
What hither brought us ! hate, not love, nor hope
Of Paradise for hell, hope here to taste
Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,
Save what is in destroying ; other joy
'To me is lost. Then let me not let pass
Occasion which now smiles : behold alone
The woman, opportune to all attempts ;
Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould ;
Foe not formidable, exempt from wound,
I not ; so much hath hell debas'd, and pain
Enfeebled me, to what I was in heav'n.
She fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods,
Not terrible, though terror be in love
And beauty, not approach'd by stronger hate,

Hate stronger, under show of love well feign'd,
The way which to her ruin now I tend.

So spake the enemy of mankind, enclos'd
In serpent, inmate bad, and toward Eve
Address'd his way, not with indented wave,
Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear,
Circular base of rising folds, that tower'd
Fold above fold a surging maze, his head
Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes ;
With burnish'd neck of verdant gold, erect
Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
Floated redundant : pleasing was his shape,
And lovely ; never since of serpent kind
Lovelier, not those that in Illyria chang'd
Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
In Epidaurus ; nor to which transform'd
Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen,
He with Olympias, this with her who bore
Scipio the height of Rome. With tract oblique
At first, as one who sought access, but fear'd
To interrupt, side-long he works his way ;
As when a ship by skilful steersman wrought
Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail :
So varied he, and of his tortuous train
Curl'd many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
To lure her eye ; she busied heard the sound
Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as us'd
To such disport before her through the field,
From every beast, more duteous at her call,
Than at Circean call the herd disguis'd.
He bolder now, uncall'd before her stood,
But as in gaze admiring ; oft he bow'd
His turret crest, and sleek enamel'd neck,
Fawning, and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.
His gentle dumb expression turn'd at length
The eye of Eve to mark his play ; he glad
Of her attention gain'd, with serpent tongue

Organic, or impulse of vocal air,
His fraudulent temptation thus began :

Wonder not, sov'reign mistress, if perhaps
Thou canst, who art sole wonder ; much less arm
Thy looks, the heav'n of mildness, with disdain,
Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze
Insatiate, I thus single, nor have fear'd
Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.
Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore
With ravishment beheld, there best beheld
When universally admir'd ; but here,
In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
Half what in thee is fair, one man except
Who sees thee ? (and what is one ?) who shouldst be
seen

A goddess among gods, ador'd and serv'd
By angels numberless, thy daily train.

So glaz'd the tempter, and his poem tun'd
Into the heart of Eve his words made way,
Though at the voice much marvelling ; at length
Not unamaz'd she thus in answer spake :
What may this mean ? language of man pronounc'd
By tongue of brute, and human sense express'd !
The first at least of these I thought deny'd
To beasts, whom God on their creation-day
Created mute to all articulate sound ;
The latter I demur, for in their looks
Much reason, and in their actions oft appears.
Thee, serpent, subtlest beast of all the field
I knew, but not with human voice endued ;
Redouble then this miracle, and say,
How cam'st thou speakable of mute, and how
To me so friendly grown above the rest
Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight :
Say, for such wonder claims attention due.

To whom the guileful tempter thus reply'd :

Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve,
Easy to me it is to tell thee all
What thou command'st, and right thou shouldst be
obey'd :

I was at first as other beasts that graze
The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
As was my food ; nor ought but food discern'd
Or sex, and apprehended nothing high :
Till on a day roving the field, I chanc'd
A goodly tree far distant to behold
Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mix'd,
Ruddy and gold : I nearer drew to gaze ;
When from the boughs a savory odour blown,
Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my sense
Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,
Unsuck'd of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
To satisfy the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair apples, I resolv'd
Not to defer ; hunger and thirst at once,
Pow'rful persuaders, quicken'd at the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keen.
About the mossy trunk I wound me soon,
For high from ground the branches would require
Thy utmost reach, or Adam's : round the tree
All other beasts that saw, with like desire
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill
I spar'd not, for such pleasure till that hour
At feed or fountain never had I found.
Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of reason in my inward pow'rs, and speech
Wanted not long, though to this shape retain'd.
Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
I turn'd my thoughts, and with capacious mind
Consider'd all things visible in heav'n,
Or earth, or middle, all things fair and good ;

But all that fair and good in thy divine
Semblance, and in thy beauty's heav'nly ray
United I beheld; no fair to thine
Equivalent or second, which compell'd
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come
And gaze, and worship thee, of right declar'd
Sov'reign of creatures, universal dame.

So talk'd the spirited sly snake; and Eve
Yet more amaz'd unwary thus reply'd:
Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first prov'd:
But say, where grows the tree, from hence how far?
For many are the trees of God that grow
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
To us, in such abundance lies our choice,
As leaves a greater store of fruit untouch'd,
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to their provision, and more hands
Help to disburden Nature of her birth.

To whom the wily adder blithe and glad:
Empress the way is ready, and not long,
Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past
Of blowing myrrh and balm; if thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon.

Lead then, said Eve: He leading swiftly roll'd
In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
Brightens his crest; as when a wand'ring fire,
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night
Condenses, and the cold environs round,
Kindled through agitation to a flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends,
Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
Misleads th' amaz'd night-wand'rer from his way
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool,
There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far.
So glister'd the dire snake, and into fraud
Led Eve our credulous mother, to the tree

Of prohibition, root of all our wo ;
Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake :

Serpent, we might have spar'd our coming hither
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here t' excess,
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee,
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects.
But of this tree we may not taste nor touch ;
God so commanded, and left that command
Sole daughter of his voice : the rest, we live
Law to ourselves, our reason is our law.

To whom the tempter guilefully reply'd :
Indeed ! hath God then said that of the fruit
Of all these garden trees ye shall not eat,
Yet lords declar'd of all in earth or air ?

To whom thus Eve yet sinless : Of the fruit
Of each tree in the garden we may eat,
But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst
The garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

She scarce had said, though brief, when now more
bold

The tempter, but with show of zeal and love
To man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on, and as to passion mov'd,
Fluctuates disturb'd, yet comely and in act
Rais'd, as if some great matter to begin.
As when of old some orator renown'd
In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence
Flourish'd, since mute, to some great cause address'd,
Stood in himself collected, while each part,
Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue,
Sometimes in height began, as no delay
Of preface brooking through his zeal of right :
So standing, moving, or to height up grown,
The tempter all impassion'd thus began :

O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant,
Mother of science, now I feel thy power
Within me clear not only to discern
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways

Of highest agents, deem'd however wise,
Queen of this universe, do not believe
Those rigid threats of death; ye shall not die:
How should ye? by the fruit? it gives you life
To knowledge; by the threat'ner? look on me,
Me who have touch'd and tasted, yet both live,
And life more perfect have attain'd than fate
Meant me, by vent'ring higher than my lot.
Shall that be shut to man, which to the beast
Is open? or will God incense his ire
For such a petty trespass, and not praise
Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
Of death denounc'd, whatever thing death be,
Deter'r'd not from achieving what might lead
To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;
Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
Be real, why not known, since easier shunn'd.
God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just;
Not just, not God; not fear'd then, nor obey'd;
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
Why then was this forbid? Why but to awe,
Why but to keep ye 'low and ignorant,
His worshippers; he knows that in the day
Ye eat thereof, your eyes that seem so clear
Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
Open'd and clear'd, and ye shall be as gods,
Knowing both good and evil as they know.
That ye shall be as gods, since I as man,
Internal man, is but proportion meet;
I of brute human, ye of human, gods;
So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
Human, to put on gods; death to be wish'd,
Tho' threaten'd, which no worse than this can bring.
And what are gods that man may not become
As they, participating god-like food?
The gods are first, and that advantage use
On our belief, that all from them proceeds;
I question it, for this fair earth I see,
Warm'd by the sun, producing every kind,

Them nothing : if they all things, who enclos'd
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains
Wisdom without their leave ? and wherein lies
Th' offence, that man should thus attain to know ?
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
Impart against his will if all be his ?
Or is it envy, and can envy dwell
In heav'nly breasts ? these, these and many more
Causes import your need of this fair fruit.
Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste.

He ended, and his words replete with guile
Into her heart too easy entrance won :
Fix'd on the fruit she gaz'd, which to behold
Might tempt alone, and in her ears the sound
Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregn'd
With reason, to her seeming, and with truth ;
Meanwhile the hour of noon drew on, and wak'd
An eager appetite, rais'd by the smell
So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,
Inclinable now grown to touch or taste,
Solicited her longing eye : yet first
Pausing awhile, thus to herself she mus'd :

Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,
Though kept from man, and worthy to be admir'd,
Whose taste, too long forborne, at first assay
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise :
Thy praise he also who forbids thy use,
Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree
Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil ;
Forbids us then to taste, but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it infers the good
By thee communicated, and our want
For good unknown, sure is not had, or had
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
In plain then, what forbids he but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise ?
Such prohibitions bind not. But if death

Bind us with after-bands, what profits then
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
Of this fair fruit, our doom is we shall die.
How dies the serpent? he hath eat'n and lives,
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented? or to us deny'd
This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?
For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which **first**
Hath tasted, envies not, but brings with joy
The good befall'n him, author unsuspect,
Friendly to man, far from deceit to guile.
What fear I then, rather what know to fear
Under this ignorance of good and evil,
Of God or death, of law or penalty?
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then
To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she eat.
Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat
Sighing through all her works gave signs of wo
That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
The guilty serpent, and well might, for Eve
Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else
Regarded, such delight till then, as seem'd,
In fruit she never tasted, whether true
Or fancy'd so, through expectation high
Of knowledge, nor was godhead from her thought.
Greedily she ingorg'd without restraint,
And knew not eating death: satiate at length,
And heighten'd as with wine, jocund and boon
Thus to herself she pleasantly began:

O sov'reign, virtuous, precious of all trees
In Paradise, of operation blest
To sapience, hitherto obscur'd, infam'd,
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
Created; but henceforth my early care,

Not without song, each morning and due praise,
Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
Of thy full branches offer'd free to all ;
Till dieted by thee I grow mature
In knowledge, as the gods who all things know ;
Though others envy what they cannot give ;
For had the gift been theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,
Best guide ; not following thee I had remain'd
In ignorance ; thou open'st wisdom's way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire.
And I perhaps am secret ; heav'n is high,
High, and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on earth ; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great forbidding, safe with all his spies
About him. But to Adam in what sort
Shall I appear ? shall I to him make known
As yet my change, and give him to partake
Full happiness with me, or rather not,
But keep the odds of knowledge in my power
Without co-partner ? so to add what wants
In female sex, the more to draw his love,
And render me more equal, and perhaps,
A thing not undesirable, sometime
Superior ; for inferior who is free ?
This may be well : but what if God have seen,
And death ensue ? then I shall be no more,
And Adam wedded to another Eve,
Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct ;
A death to think. Confirm'd then I resolve,
Adam shall share with me in bliss or wo ;
So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
I could endure, without him live no life.

So saying, from the tree her step she turn'd,
But first low reverence done, as to the power
That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd,
Into the plant scintial sap, deriv'd
From nectar, drink of gods. Adam the while

Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest flow'rs a garland to adorn
Her tresses, and her rural labours crown,
As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.
Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long delay'd ;
Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill,
Misgave him ; he the falt'ring measure felt ;
And forth to meet her went, the way she took
That morn when first they parted ; by the tree
Of knowledge he must pass, there he her met
Scarce from the tree returning ; in her hand
A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smil'd
New gather'd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd.
To him she hasted ; in her face excuse
Came prologue, and apology too prompt,
Which with bland words at will she thus address'd :

Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay ?
Thee I have miss'd, and thought it long depriv'd
Thy presence, agony of love till now
Not felt, nor shall be twice, for never more
Mean I to try, what rash untry'd I sought,
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear ;
This tree is not as we are told, a tree
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
Opening the way, but of divine effect
To open eyes, and make them gods who taste ;
And hath been tasted such ; the serpent wise,
Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,
Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,
Not dead, as we are threaten'd, but thenceforth
Endued with voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration, and with me
Persuasively hath so prevail'd, that I
Have also tasted, and have also found
Th' effects to correspond, opener mine eyes,
Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
And growing up to godhead ; which for thee

Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss,
Tedious unshar'd with thee, and odious soon.
Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
May join us, equal joy, as equal love;
Lest thou not tasting, different degree
Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
Deity for thee, when fate will not permit.

Thus Eve with count'nance blithe her story told;
But in her cheek distemper flushing glow'd.
On th' other side, Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal trespass done by Eve, amaz'd,
Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd;
From his slack hand the garland wreath'd for Eve
Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed:
Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
First to himself he inward silence broke:
O fairest of creation, last and best
Of all God's works, creature in whom excell'd
Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost,
Defac'd, deflower'd, and now to death devote?
Rather how hast thou yielded to transgress
The strict forbiddance, how to violate
The sacred fruit forbidden? some cursed fraud
Of enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown,
And me with thee hath ruin'd, for with thee
Certain my resolution is to die;
How can I live without thee, how forego
Thy sweet converse and love so dearly join'd,
To live again in these wild woods forlorn?
Should God create another Eve, and I
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from my heart; no no, I feel
The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or wo.

So having said, as one from sad dismay
Recomforted, and after thoughts disturb'd
Submitting to what seem'd remediless,
Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turn'd:

Bold deed thou hast presum'd, advent'rous Eve,
And peril great provok'd, who thus hast dar'd,
Had it been only coveting to eye
That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,
Much more to taste it under ban to touch.
But past who can recal, or done undo?
Not God omnipotent, nor Fate; yet so
Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact
Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
Profan'd first by the serpent, by him first
Made common and unhallow'd ere our taste;
Nor yet on him found deadly, he yet lives,
Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live as man
Higher degree of life, inducement strong
To us, as likely tasting to attain
Proportional ascent, which cannot be
But to be gods, or angels, demi-gods.
Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
Though threat'ning, will in earnest so destroy
Us his prime creatures, dignify'd so high,
Set over all his works, which in our fall,
For us created, needs with us must fail,
Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose,
Not well conceiv'd of God, who, though his power
Creation could repeat, yet would be loath
Us to abolish, lest the adversary
Triumph and say; Fickle their state whom God
Most favours; who can please him long? Me first
He ruin'd, now mankind; whom will he next?
Matter of scorn, not to be given the foe.
However I with thee have fix'd my lot,
Certain to undergo like doom; if death
Consort with thee, death is to me as life;
So forcible within my heart I feel

The bond of nature draw me to my own,
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine ;
Our state cannot be sever'd, we are one,
One flesh ; to lose thee were to lose myself.

So Adam, and thus Eve to him reply'd :

O glorious trial of exceeding love,
Illustrious evidence, example high !
Engaging me to emulate, but short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
Adam ? from whose dear side I boast me sprung,
And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
One heart, one soul in both ; whereof good proof
This day affords, declaring thee resolv'd,
Rather than death or aught than death more dread
Shall separate us, link'd in love so dear,
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit,
Whose virtue (for of good still good proceeds,
Direct, or by occasion) hath presented
This happy trial of thy love, which else
So eminently never had been known.
Were it I thought death menac'd would ensue
This my attempt, I would sustain alone
The worst, and not persuade thee, rather die
Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact
Pernicious to thy peace, chiefly assur'd
Remarkably so late, of thy so true,
So faithful love unequal'd ; but I feel
Far otherwise th' event, not death, but life
Augmented, open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys,
Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
Hath touch'd my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
And fear of death deliver to the winds.

So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy
Tenderly wept, much won that he his love
Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
In recompense (for such compliance bad

Such recompense best merits) from the bough
She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
With liberal hand : he scrupled not to eat
Against his better knowledge, not deceiv'd,
But fondly overcome with female charm.
Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan,
Sky lour'd, and muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal sin
Original ; while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill, nor Eve to iterate
Her former trespass fear'd, the more to soothe
Him with her lov'd society that now
As with new wine intoxicated both,
They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
Divinity within them breeding wings
Wherewith to scorn the earth : but that false fruit
Far other operation first display'd,
Carnal desire inflaming ; he on Eve
Began to cast lascivious eye, she him
As wantonly repaid ; in lust they burn :
Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move :

Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
And elegant, of sapience no small part,
Since to each meaning savour we apply,
And palate call judicious ; I the praise
Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd
From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting ; if such pleasure be
In things to us forbidd'n, it might be wish'd,
For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
But come, so well refresh'd, now let us play,
As meet is after such delicious fare ;
For never did thy beauty since the day
I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd
With all perfections, so inflame my sense
With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
Than ever, bounty of this virtuous tree,

So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
Of amorous intent, well understood
Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
Her hand he seiz'd, and to a shady bank,
Thick overhead with verdant roof embow'rd,
He led her nothing loath; flow'rs were the couch
Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,
And hyacinth, earth's freshest softest lap.
There they their fill of love and love's disport
Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
The solace of their sin, till dewy sleep
Oppress'd them, wearied with their amorous play,
Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
That with exhilarating vapour bland
About their spirits had play'd, and inmost powers
Made err, was now exhal'd; and grosser sleep
Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams
Encumber'd, now had left them; up they rose
As from unrest, and each the other viewing,
Soon found their eyes how open'd, and their miⁿds
How darken'd; innocence, that as a veil
Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone,
Just confidence, and native righteousness,
And honour from about them, naked left
To guilty shame: he cover'd, but his robe
Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong
Herculean Sampson from the harlot-lap
Of Philistean Dalilah, and wak'd
Shorn of his strength, they destitute and bare
Of all their virtue: silent, and in face
Confounded long they sat, as stricken mute,
Till Adam, though not less than Eve abash'd,
At length gave utterance to these words constrain'd
O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear
To that false worm, of whomsoever taught
To counterfeit man's voice, true in our fall,
False in our promis'd rising; since our eyes
Open'd we find indeed, and find we know
Both good and evil, good lost, and evil got.

Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know
Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
Of innocence, of faith, of purity.
Our wonted ornaments now soil'd and stain'd,
And in our faces evident the signs
Of foul concupiscence : whence evil store ;
Ev'n shame, the last of evils ; of the first
Be sure then. How shall I behold the face
Henceforth of God or angel erst with joy
And rapture so oft beheld ? those heav'nly shapes
Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
Insufferably bright. O might I here
In solitude like savage, in some glade
Obscur'd, where highest woods impenetrable
To star or sun-light spread their umbrage broad
And brown as evening : cover me, ye pines,
Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs
Hide me, where I may never see them more.
But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
What best may for the present serve to hide
The parts of each from other, that seem most
To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen :
Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sow'd,
And girded on our loins, may cover round
Those middle parts, that this new comer shame
There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.

So counsell'd he, and both together went
Into the thickest wood ; there soon they chose
The fig-tree, not that kind for fruit renown'd,
But such as at this day to Indians known
In Malabar or Decan spread her arms
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
About the mother tree, a pillar'd shade
High over-arch'd and echoing walks between ;
There oft the Indian herdsman shunning heat
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
At loop-holes cut thro' thickest shade. Those leaves
They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe,

And with what skill they had, together sow'd
To gird their waist, vain covering if to hide
Their guilt and dreaded shame ; O how unlike
To that first naked glory ! Such of late
Columbus found th' American, so girt
With feather'd cincture, naked else and wild
Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
Thus fenc'd and as they thought, their shame in part
Cover'd, but not at rest, or ease of mind,
They sat them down to weep ; nor only tears
Rain'd at their eyes, but high winds worse within
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
Mistrust, suspicion, discord, and shook sore
Their inward state of mind, calm region once
And full of peace, now tost and turbulent ;
For understanding rul'd not, and the will
Heard not her lore, both in subjection now
To sensual appetite, who from beneath
Usurping over sov'reign reason claim'd
Superior sway : from thus distemper'd breast,
Adam, estrang'd in look and altered style,
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renew'd :

Would thou hadst hearken'd to my words and stay'd
With me as I besought thee, when that strange
Desire of wand'ring this unhappy morn,
I know not whence, possess'd thee ; we had then
Remain'd still happy, not as now despoil'd
Of all our good, sham'd, naked, miserable.
Let none henceforth seek needless cause t' approve
The faith they owe ; when earnestly they seek
Such proof, conclude they then begin to fail.

To whom soon mov'd with touch of blame thus Eve.
What words have pass'd thy lips, Adam severe !
Imput'st thou that to my default, or will
Of wand'ring, as thou call'st it, which who knows
But might as ill have happen'd thou being by,
Or to thyself perhaps ? hadst thou been there,
Or here th' attempt, thou couldst not have discern'd
Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake ;

No ground of enmity between us known,
Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.
Was I to have never parted from thy side ?
As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.
Being as I am, why didst not thou the head
Command me absolutely not to go,
Going into such danger as thou saidst ?
Too facile then thou didst not much gainsay,
Nay didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
Hadst thou been firm and fix'd in thy dissent,
Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with me.

To whom then first incens'd Adam reply'd :
Is this the love, is this the recompense
Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve, express'd
Immutable when thou wert lost, not I,
Who might have liv'd and joy'd immortal bliss,
Yet willingly chose rather death with thee !
And am I now upbraided as the cause
Of thy transgressing ? not enough severe,
It seems, in thy restraint : what could I more ?
I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold
The danger, and the lurking enemy
That lay in wait ; beyond this had been force,
And force upon free will hath here no place.
But confidence then bore thee on, secure
Either to meet no danger, or to find
Matter of glorious trial ; and perhaps
I also err'd in overmuch admiring
What seem'd in thee so perfect, that I thought
No evil durst attempt thee, but I rue
That error now, which is become my crime,
And thou th' accuser. Thus it shall befall
Him who to worth in women overtrusting
Lets her will rule : restraint she will not brook,
And left to herself, if evil thence ensue,
She first his weak indulgence will accuse.

Thus they in mutual accusation spent
The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,
And of their vain contest appear'd no end.



THE
TENTH BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

MAN's transgression known, the guardian angels forsake Paradise, and return up to Heaven to approve their vigilance, and are approved, God declaring that the entrance of Satan could not be by them prevented. He sends his Son to judge the transgressors, who descends and gives sentence accordingly; then in pity clothes them both, and reascends.

Sin and Death sitting till then at the gates of Hell, by wondrous sympathy feeling the success of Satan in this new world, and the sin by man there committed, resolves to sit no longer confined in Hell, but to follow Satan their sire up to the place of man: to make the way easier from Hell to this world to and fro, they pave a broad high-way or bridge over Chaos, according to the track that Satan first made; then preparing for Earth, they meet him proud of his success, returning to Hell; their mutual gratulation. Satan arrives at Pandemonium, in full assembly relates with boasting his success against man: instead of applause is entertained with a general hiss by all his audience, transformed with himself also suddenly into serpents, according to his doom given in Paradise; then deluded with a show of the forbidden tree springing up before them, they greedily reaching to take of the fruit, chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death; God foretels the final victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things: but for the present commands his angels to make several alterations in the Heavens and elements. Adam more and more perceiving his fallen condition heavily bewails, rejects the condolment of Eve: she persists, and at length appeases him: then to evade the curse likely to fall on their offspring, proposes to Adam violent ways, which he approves not, but conceiving better hope, puts her in mind of the late promise made them, that her seed should be revenged on the serpent, and exhorts her with him to seek peace of the offended Deity, by repentance and supplication.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK X.

MEANWHILE the heinous and spiteful act
Of Satan done in Paradise, and how
He in the serpent, had perverted Eve,
Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,
Was known in heav'n ; for what can 'scape the eye
Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart
Omniscient ? who in all things wise and just,
Hinder'd not Satan to attempt the mind
Of man, with strength entire and free will arm'd,
Complete to have discover'd and repuls'd
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.
For still they knew, and ought to have still remem-
ber'd

The high injunction not to taste that fruit,
Whoever tempted ; which they not obeying,
Incurr'd (what could they less ?) the penalty,
And manifold in sin, deserv'd to fall.
Up into heav'n from Paradise in haste
The angelic guards ascended, mute and sad
For man, for of his state by this they knew,
Much wond'ring how the subtle fiend had stol'n
Entrance unseen. Soon as th' unwelcome news
From earth, arriv'd at heav'n gate, displeas'd
All were who heard : dim sadness did not spare
That time celestial visages, yet mix'd

With pity, violated not their bliss.
About the new-arriv'd, in multitudes
Th' etherial people ran, to hear and know
How all befel ; they towards the throne supreme,
Accountable made haste to make appear
With righteous plea their utmost vigilance,
And easily approv'd ; when the most high
Eternal Father, from his secret cloud :
Amidst, in thunder utter'd thus his voice :

Assembled angels, and ye pow'rs return'd
From unsuccessful charge, be not dismay'd,
Nor troubled at these tidings from the earth,
Which your sincerest care could not prevent,
Foretold so lately what would come to pass.
When first this tempter cross'd the gulf from hell.
I told ye then he should prevail and speed
On his bad errand, man should be seduc'd
And flatter'd out of all, believing lies
Against his Maker ; no decree of mine
Concurring to necessitate his fall,
Or touch with lightest moment of impulse
His free will, to her own inclining left
In even scale. But fallen he is, and now
What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass
On his transgression, death denounc'd that day ?
Which he presumes already vain and void,
Because not yet inflicted, as he fear'd,
By some immediate stroke ; but soon shall find
Forbearance no acquittance, ere day end
Justice shall not return as bounty scorn'd.
But whom send I to judge them ? whom but thee
Vicegerent Son ? to thee I have transferr'd
All judgment whether in heav'n, or earth, or hell.
Easy it may be seen that I intend
Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee
Man's friend, his mediator, his design'd
Both ransom and redeemer voluntary,
And destin'd man himself to judge man fall'n.

So spake the Father, and unfolding bright
Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son
Blaz'd forth unclouded deity; he full
Resplendent all his Father manifest
Express'd, and thus divinely answer'd mild:

Father eternal, thine is to decree,
Mine both in heav'n and earth, to do thy will
Supreme, that thou in me thy Son belov'd
Mayst ever rest well pleas'd. I go to judge
On earth these thy transgressors, but thou know'st,
Whoever judg'd, the worst on me must light,
When time shall be, for so I undertook
Before thee; and not repenting, this obtain
Of right, that I may mitigate their doom
On me deriv'd, yet I shall temper so
Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most
Them fully satisfy'd, and thee appease.
Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none
Are to behold the judgment, but the jug'd,
Those two; the third best absent is condemn'd,
Convict by flight, and rebel to all law;
Conviction to the serpent none belongs.

Thus saying from his radiant seat he rose
Of high collateral glory: him thrones and powers,
Princedoms, and dominations ministrant
Accompanied to heav'n gate, from whence
Eden and all the coast in prospect lay.
Down he descended straight; the speed of gods
Time counts not, tho' with swiftest minutes wing'd.
Now was the sun in western cadence low
From noon, and gentle airs due at their hour
To fan the earth now wak'd, and usher in
The evening cool, when he from wrath more cool
Came the mild judge and intercessor both
To sentence man: the voice of God they heard
Now walking in the garden, by soft winds
Brought to their ears, while day declin'd; they heard,
And from his presence hid themselves among
The thickest trees, both man and wife, till God

Approaching, thus to Adam call'd aloud :
Where art thou Adam, wont with joy to meet
My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,
Not pleas'd, thus entertain'd with solitude,
Where obvious duty erewhile appear'd unsought :
Or come I less conspicuous, or what change
Absents thee, or what chance detain? Come forth!

He came, and with him Eve, more loath, though
first

To offend, discount'nanc'd both, and discompos'd ;
Love was not in their looks, either to God
Or to each other, but apparent guilt,
And shame, and perturbation, and despair,
Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile.
Whence Adam, falt'ring long, thus answer'd brief,
I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice
Afraid, being naked, hid myself. To whom
The gracious judge, without revile reply'd :
My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,
But still rejoic'd ; how is it now become
So dreadful to thee ? that thou art naked, who
Hath told thee ? hast thou eaten of the tree,
Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat ?

To whom thus Adam sore beset replied :
O heav'n ! in evil strait this day I stand
Before my judge, either to undergo
Myself the total crime, or to accuse
My other self, the partner of my life ;
Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,
I should conceal, and not expose to blame
By my complaint ; but strict necessity
Subdues me, and calamitous constraint.
Lest on my head both sin and punishment,
However insupportable, be all
Devolv'd : though should I hold my peace, yet thou
Wouldst easily detect what I conceal.
This woman, whom thou mad'st to be my help,
And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,
So fit, so acceptable, so divine,

That from her hand I could suspect no ill,
And what she did, whatever in itself,
Her doing seem'd to justify the deed ;
She gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

To whom the sov'reign Presence thus reply'd :
Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey
Before his voice, or was she made thy guide
Superior, or but equal, that to her
Thou didst thy manhood, and the place
Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
And for thee, whose perfection far excell'd
Hers in real dignity ? Adorn'd
She was indeed, and lovely to attract
Thy love, not thy subjection ; and her gifts
Were such as under government well seem'd,
Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part
And person hadst thou known thyself aright.

So having said, he thus to Eve in few :
Say, woman, what is this which thou hast done ?

To whom sad Eve with shame nigh overwhelm'd,
Confessing soon, yet not before her judge
Bold or loquacious, thus abash'd reply'd :
The serpent me beguil'd and I did eat,

Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
To judgment he proceeded on th' accus'd
Serpent though brute, unable to transfer
The guilt on him who made him instrument
Of mischief, and polluted from the end
Of his creation : justly then accurs'd.
As vitiated in nature ; more to know
Concern'd not man (since he no further knew)
Nor alter'd his offence ; yet God at last
To satan first in sin his doom apply'd,
Though in mysterious terms, judg'd as then best :
And on the serpent thus his curse let fall :
Because thou hast done this, thou art accurs'd
Above all cattle, each beast of the field ;
Upon thy belly groveling thou shalt go,
And dust shall eat all the days of thy life.

Between thee and the woman, I will put
Enmity, and between thine and her seed ;
Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.

So spake this oracle, then verify'd
When Jesus son of Mary, second Eve,
Saw Satan fall like lightning down from heav'n,
Prince of the air ; then rising from his grave
Spoil'd principalities and pow'rs, triumph'd
In open show, and with ascension bright,
Captivity led captive through the air,
The realm itself of Satan long usurp'd,
Whom he shall tread at last under our feet ;
Ev'n he who now foretold his fatal bruise,
And to the woman thus his sentence turn'd :
Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
By thy conception ; children thou shalt bring
In sorrow forth ; and to thy husband's will
Thine shall submit ; he over thee shall rule.

On Adam last thus judgment he pronounc'd :
Because thou hast hearken'd to the voice of thy wife,
And eaten of the tree, concerning which
I charg'd thee saying, Thou shalt not eat thereof :
Curs'd is the ground for thy sake ; thou in sorrow
Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life ;
Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
Unbid ; and thou shalt eat th' herb of the field.
In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,
Till thou return unto the ground ; for thou
Out of the ground wast taken, know thy birth,
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.

So judg'd he man, both judge and saviour sent,
And th' instant stroke of death denounc'd that day
Remov'd far off : then pitying how they stood
Before him naked to the air, that now
Must suffer change, disdain'd not to begin
Thenceforth the form of servant to assume.
As when he wash'd his servants' feet, so now,
As father of his family he clad
Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain,

Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid ;
And thought not much to clothe his enemies ;
Nor he their outward only with the skins
Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more
Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness,
Arraying cover'd from his Father's sight.
To him with swift ascent he up return'd.
Into his blissful bosom reassum'd
In glory as of old ; to him appeas'd
All, though all-knowing, what had pass'd with man
Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.

Meanwhile ere thus was sinn'd and judg'd on Earth,
Within the gates of hell sat Sin and Death,
In counterview within the gates, that now
Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
Far into Chaos, since the fiend pass'd through,
Sin opening, who thus now to Death began :

O son, why sit we here each other veiwing
Idly, while Satan our great author thrives
In other worlds, and happier seat provides
For us his offspring dear ? It cannot be
But that success attends him ; if mishap,
Ere this he had return'd, with fury driven
By his avengers, since no place like this
Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.
Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
Wings growing, and dominion given me large
Beyond this deep ; whatever draws me on,
Or sympathy, or some connatural force
Pow'rful at greatest distance to unite
With secret amity things of like kind
By secretest conveyance. Thou my shade
Inseparable must with me along :
For Death from Sin no pow'r can separate.
But lest the difficulty of passing back
Stay his return perhaps over this gulf
Impassable, impervious, let us try
Advent'rous work, yet to thy pow'r and mine
Not unagreeable. to found a path

Over this main from hell to that new world
Where Satan now prevails, a monument
Of merit high to all th' infernal host,
Easing their passage hence, for intercourse,
Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.
Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
By this new felt attraction and instinct.

Whom thus the meagre shadow answer'd soon :
Go whither fate and inclination strong
Leads thee ; I shall not lag behind, nor err
The way, thou leading, such a scent I draw
Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
The savour of death from all things there that live .
Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.

So saying, with delight he snuff'd the smell
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
Against the day of battle, to a field,
Where armies lie encamp'd, come flying, lur'd
With scent of living carcasses design'd
For death the following day, in bloody fight :
So scented the grim feature, and upturn'd
His nostril wide into the murky air,
Sagacious of his quarry from so far.
Then both from out hell gates into the waste
Wide anarchy of Chaos damp and dark
Flew diverse, and with pow'r (their pow'r was great)
Hovering upon the waters, what they met
Solid or slimy, as in raging sea
Tost up and down, together crowded drove
From each side shoaling towards the mouth of hell .
As when two polar winds, blowing adverse,
Upon the Cronian sea, together drive
Mountains of ice, that stop th' imagin'd way
Beyond Petsora eastward, to the rich
Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil
Death with his mace petrific, cold and dry,
As with a trident smote, and fix'd as firm

As Delos floating once ; the rest his look
Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move ;
And with asphaltic slime, broad as the gate,
Deep as the roots of hell the gather'd beach
They fasten'd, and the mole immense wrought on
Over the foaming deep high arch'd, a bridge
Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
Immoveable of this now fenceless world
Forfeit to Death ; from hence a passage broad,
Smooth, easy, inoffensive down to hell.
So if great things to small may be compar'd,
Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,
From Susa, his Memnonian palace high,
Came to the sea, and over Hellespont
Bridging his way, Europe with Asia join'd ;
And scourg'd with many a stroke the indignant waves.
Now had they brought the work by wondrous art
Pontifical, a ridge of pendant rock,
Over the vex'd abyss, following the track
Of Satan to the self-same place where he
First lighted from his wing, and landed safe
From out of Chaos, to the outside bare
Of this round world : with pins of adamant
And chains they made all fast, too fast they made
And durable ; and now in little space
The confines met of empyrean heav'n
And of this world, and on the left hand hell
With long reach interpos'd ; three several ways
In sight, to each of these three places led.
And now their way to earth they had descry'd
To Paradise first tending, when behold
Satan in likeness of an angel bright
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering
His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose :
Disguis'd he came, but those his children dear
Their parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.
He after Eve seduc'd, unminded slunk
Into the wood fast by, and changing shape
To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act

By Eve, though all unweeting seconded
Upon her husband, saw their shame that sought
Vain covertures; but when he saw descend
The Son of God to judge them, terrify'd
He fled, not hoping to escape, but shun
The present, fearing guilty what his wrath
Might suddenly inflict; that past, return'd
By night, and list'ning where the hapless pair
Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint;
Thence gather'd his own doom, which understood
Not instant, but of future time, with joy
And tidings fraught, to hell he now return'd,
And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhop'd
Met who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight
Of that stupendous bridge his joy increas'd.
Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke:

O parent, these are thy magnific deeds,
Thy trophies, which thou view'st as not thine own;
Thou art their author and prime architect:
For I no sooner in my heart divin'd,
My heart, which by a secret harmony
Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet,
That thou on earth hadst prosper'd, which thy looks
Now also evidence, but straight I felt
Though distant from the worlds between, yet felt
That I must after thee with this thy son,
Such fatal consequence unites us three:
Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds,
Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
Detain from following thy illustrious track.
Thou hast achiev'd our liberty, confin'd
Within hell gates till now, thou us impower'd
To fortify thus far, and overlay
With this portentous bridge the dark abyss.
Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won
What thy hands builded not, thy wisdom gain'd

With odds what war hath lost, and fully aveng'd
Our foil in heav'n ; here thou shalt monarch reign,
There didst not ; there let him still victor sway,
As battle hath adjudg'd, from this new world
Retiring, by his own doom alienated,
And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
Of all things parted by th' empyreal bounds,
His quadrature, from thy orbicular world,
Or try thee now more dang'rous to his throne.

Whom thus the prince of darkness answer'd glad .
Fair daughter, and thou son and grandchild both,
High proof ye now have giv'n to be the race
Of Satan (for I glory in the name,
Antagonist of heav'n's almighty King,)
AmPLY have merited of me, of all
Th' infernal empire, that so near heav'n's door
Triumphal with triumphal act have met,
Mine with this glorious work, and made one realm
Hell and this world, one realm, one continent
Of easy thorough-fare. Therefore while I
Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,
To my associate pow'rs, them to acquaint
With these successes, and with them rejoice,
You two this way, among these numerous orbs
All yours, right down to Paradise descend ;
There dwell and reign in bliss, thence on the earth
Dominion exercise and in the air,
Chiefly on man, sole lord of all declar'd
Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.
My substitutes I send ye, and create
Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might
Issuing from me : on your joint vigour now
My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
Through Sin to Death expos'd by my exploit.
If your joint power prevail, th' affairs of hell
No detriment need fear ; go and be strong.

So saying, he dismiss'd them ; they with speed
Their course through thickest constellations held,
Spreading their bane ; the blasted stars look'd wan,

And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse
Then suffer'd. Th' other way Satan went down
The causey to hell gate; on either side
Disparted Chaos overbuilt exclaim'd,
And with rebounding surge the bars assail'd,
That scorn'd his indignation: through the gates,
Wide open and unguarded, Satan pass'd,
And all about found desolate; for those
Appointed to sit there, had left their charge,
Flown to the upper world; the rest were all
Far to the inland retir'd, about the walls
Of Pandemonium, city and proud seat
Of Lucifer, so by allusion call'd,
Of that bright star to Satan paragon'd.
There kept their watch the legions, while the grand
In council sat, solicitous what chance
Might intercept their emp'ror sent; so he
Departing gave command, and they observ'd.

As when the Tartar from his Russian foe
By Astracan, over the snowy plains
Retires, or Bactrian sophi from the horns
Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond
The realm of Aladule, in his retreat
To Taurus or Casbeen: so these the late
Heav'n-banish'd host, left desert utmost hell
Many a dark league, reduc'd in careful watch
Round their metropolis, and now expecting
Each hour their great adventurer from the search
Of foreign worlds: he through the midst unmark'd
In show plebian, angel militant
Of lowest order, pass'd; and from the door
Of that Plutonian hall, invisible
Ascended his high throne, which under state
Of richest texture spread, at the upper end
Was plac'd in regal lustre. Down awhile
He sat, and round about him saw unseen;
At last as from a cloud his fulgent head
And shape star-bright appear'd, or brighter clad
With what permissive glory since his fall

Was left him, or false glitter : all amaz'd
At that so sudden blaze the Stygian throng
Bent their aspect, and whom they wish'd beheld,
Their mighty chief return'd : loud was th' acclaim ;
Forth rush'd in haste the great consulting peers,
Rais'd from their dark divan, and with like joy
Congratulant approach'd him, who with hand
Silence, and with these words attention won :

Thrones, dominations, principdoms, virtues, powers,
For in possession such, not only of right,
I call ye and declare ye now, return'd
Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
Triumphant out of this infernal pit
Abominable, accurs'd, the house of wo,
And dungeon of our tyrant : now possess,
As lords, a spacious world, to our native heav'n
Little inferior, by my adventure hard
With peril great achiev'd. Long were to tell
What I have done, what suffer'd, with what pain
Voyag'd th' unreal, vast, unbounded deep
Of horrible confusion, over which
By Sin and Death a broad way now is pav'd
To expedite your glorious march ; but I
Toil'd out my uncouth passage, forc'd to ride
Th' untractable abyss, plung'd in the womb
Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild,
That jealous of their secrets fiercely oppos'd
My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
Protesting Fate supreme ; thence how I found
The new created world, which fame in heav'n
Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful
Of absolute perfection, therein man
Plac'd in a Paradise, by our exile
Made happy ; him by fraud I have seduc'd
From his Creator, and the more to increase
Your wonder, with an apple ; he thereat
Offended, worth your laughter, hath giv'n up
Both his beloved man and all his world,
To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us,

Without our hazard, labour, or alarm,
To range in, and to dwell. and over man
To rule, as over all he should have rul'd.
True is, me also he hath judg'd, or rather
Me not, but the brute serpent in whose shape
Man I deceiv'd; that which to me belongs
Is enmity, which he will put between
Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;
His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:
A world who would not purchase with a bruise,
Or much more grievous pain? Ye have th' account
Of my performance: what remains, ye gods,
But up and enter now into full bliss?

So having said, awhile he stood, expecting
Their universal shout and high applause
To fill his ear, when contrary he hears
On all sides from innumerable tongues
A dismal universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn; he wonder'd, but not long
Had leisure, wondering at himself now more;
His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
His arms clung to his ribs, his legs intertwining
Each other, till supplanted down he fell
A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
Reluctant, but in vain, a greater power
Now rul'd him, punish'd in the shape he sinn'd,
According to his doom; he would have spoke,
But hiss for hiss return'd with forked tongue
To forked tongue, for now were all transform'd
Alike, to serpents all as accessories
To his bold riot: dreadful was the din
Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now
With complicated monsters head and tail,
Scorpion and asp, amphisæna dire,
Cerastes horn'd, hydras, and elops drear,
And dipsas (not so thick swarm'd once the soil
Be-dropt with blood of gorgon, or the isle
Ophiusa,) but still greatest he the midst,
Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun

Ingender'd in the Pythian vale on slime,
Huge Python, and his pow'r no less he seem'd
Above the rest still to retain; they all
Him follow'd issuing forth to the open field,
Where all yet left of that revolted rout
Heav'n-fall'n, in station stood or just array,
Sublime, with expectation when to see
In triumph issuing forth their glorious chief;
They saw, but other sight instead, a crowd
Of ugly serpents; horror on them fell,
And horrid sympathy; for what they saw,
They felt themselves now changing; down
arms,

Down fell both spear and shield, down they as fast,
And the dire hiss renew'd, and the dire form
Catch'd by contagion, like in punishment,
As in their crime. Thus was th' applause they meant,
Turn'd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame
Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There
stood

A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,
His will who reigns above, to aggravate
Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
Us'd by the tempter; on that prospect strange
Their earnest eyes they fix'd, imagining
For one forbidden tree a multitude
Now ris'n, to work them further wo or shame:
Yet parch'd with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
Though to delude them sent, could not abstain,
But on they roll'd in heaps, and up the trees
Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks
That curl'd Megæra: greedily they pluck'd
The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flam'd.
This more delusive, not the touch, but taste
Deceiv'd; they fondly thinking to allay
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit,
Chew'd bitter ashes, which th' offended taste

With spattering noise rejected : oft they assay'd,
Hunger and thirst constraining, drugg'd as oft,
With hatefulest disrelish writh'd their jaws
With soot and cinders fill'd ; so oft they fell
Into the same illusion, not as man
Whom they triumph'd once laps'd. Thus were they
plagu'd

And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,
Till their lost shape, permitted, they resum'd,
Yearly enjoin'd some say, to undergo
This annual humbling certain number'd days,
To dash their pride, and joy for man seduc'd.
However some tradition they dispers'd
Among the heathen of their purchase got,
And fabled how the serpent, whom they call'd
Ophion with Eurynome, the wide
Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule
Of high Olympus, thence by Saturn driven
And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.

Meanwhile in Paradise the hellish pair
Too soon arriv'd, Sin there in pow'r before,
Once actual, now in body, and to dwell
Habitual habitant ; behind her Death
Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet
On his pale horse : to whom Sin thus began :

Second of Satan sprung, all conqu'ring Death,
What think'st thou of our empire now, tho' earn'd
With travel difficult, not better far
Than still at hell's dark thresho'd to have sat watch,
Unnam'd, undreaded, and thyself half starv'd ?

Whom thus the sin-born monster answer'd soon :
To me, who with eternal famine pine,
Alike is hell, or Paradise, or heav'n,
There best, where most with ravin I may meet ;
Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems
To stuff this maw, this vast unhide-bound corps.

To whom th' incestuous mother thus reply'd :
Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and flow'rs
Feed first, on each beast next, and fish, and fowl,

No homely morsels ; and whatever thing
The scythe of Time mows down, devour unspar'd,
Till I in man residing through the race,
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect,
And season him thy last and sweetest prey.

This said, they both betook them several ways,
Both to destroy or unimmortal make
All kinds, and for destruction to mature
Sooner or later ; which th' Almighty seeing,
From his transcendent seat, the Saints among,
To those bright orders utter'd thus his voice :

See with what heat these dogs of hell advance
To waste and havoc yonder world, which I
So fair and good created, and had still
Kept in that state, had not the folly of man
Let in these wasteful furies, who impute
Folly to me, so doth the prince of hell
And his adherents, that with so much ease
I suffer them to enter and possess
A place so heav'nly, and conniving seem
To gratify my scornful enemies,
That laugh, as if transported with some fit
Of passion, I to them had quitted all,
At random yielded up to their misrule ;
And know not that I call'd and drew them thither
My hell hounds, to lick up the draff and filth
Which man's polluting sin with taint hath shed
On what was pure, till cramm'd and gorg'd nigh burst
With suck'd and glutted offal, at one sling
Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
Both Sin and Death, and yawning grave at last
Through Chaos hurl'd obstruct the mouth of hell
For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.
Then heav'n and earth renew'd shall be made pure
To sanctity that shall receive no stain ;
Till then the curse pronounc'd on both precedes.

He ended, and the heav'nly audience loud
Sung hallelujah, as the sound of seas,
Through multitude that sung : Just are thy ways,

Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works ;
Who can extenuate thee ? next to the Son,
Destin'd restorer of mankind, by whom
New Heav'n and Earth shall to ages rise,
Or down from heav'n descend. Such was their song,
While the Creator calling forth by name
His mighty angels gave them several charge,
As sorted best with present things. The sun
Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
As might effect the earth with cold and heat
Scarce tolerable, and from the north to call
Decrepit winter, from the south to bring
Solstitial summer's heat. To the blanc moon
Her office they prescrib'd, to th' other five
Their planetary motions and aspects,
In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite
Of noxious efficacy, and when to join
In synod unbenign ; and taught the fix'd
Their influence malignant when to shower,
Which of them rising with the sun, or falling,
Should prove tempestuous ; to the winds they set
Their corners, when with bluster to confound
Sea, air, and shore, the thunder when to roll
With terror through the dark æreal hall.
Some say he bid his angels turn askance
The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more
From the sun's axle ; they with labour push'd
Oblique the centric globe : some say the sun
Was bid turn reins from th' equinoctial road
Like distant breadth to Taurus with the seven
Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins
Up to the Tropic Crab ; thence down amain
By Leo and the Virgin and the Scales,
As deep as Capricorn, to bring in change
Of seasons to each clime ; else had the spring
Perpetual smil'd on earth with verdant flowers,
Equal in days and nights, except to those
Beyond the polar circles ; to them day
Had unbenighted shone, while the low sun

To recompense his distance, in their sight
Had rounded still the horizon, and not known
Or east or west, which had forbid the snow
From cold Estotiland, and south as far
Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit
The sun as from Thyestean banquet, turn'd
His course intended; else how had the world
Inhabited though sinless, more than now,
Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?
These changes in the heav'ns, though slow, produc'd
Like change on sea and land, sidereal blast,
Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,
Corrupt and pestilent: now from the north
Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,
Bursting their brazen dungeon, arm'd with ice
And snow and hail and stormy gust and flaw,
Boreas and Cæcias and Argestes loud
And Thrascias rend the woods and seas upturn;
With adverse blast upturns them from the south
Notus and Afer black with thund'rous clouds
From Serralliona; thwart of these as fierce
Forth rush the levant and the ponent winds
Eurus and Zephyr with their lateral noise,
Sirocco and Libbecchio. Thus began
Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first
Daughter of Sin, among th' irrational,
Death introduc'd through fierce antipathy:
Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
And fish with fish: to graze the herb all leaving,
Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe
Of man, but fled him, or with count'nance grim
Glar'd on him passing. These were from without
The growing miseries, which Adam saw
Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
To sorrow abandon'd, but worse felt within,
And in a troubled sea of passion tost,
Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint:
O miserable of happy! is this the end
Of this new glorious world, and me so late

The glory of that glory, who now become
Accurs'd of blessed, hide me from the face
Of God, whom to behold was then my height
Of happiness! yet well, if here would end
The misery: I deserv'd it, and would bear
My **own** deservings; but this will not serve:
All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
Is propagated curse. O voice once heard
Delightfully, *Increase and multiply*,
Now death to hear! for what can I increase
Or multiply, but curses on my head?
Who of all ages to succeed, but feeling
The evil on him brought by me will curse
My head? Ill fare our ancestor impure,
For this we may thank Adam; but his thanks
Shall be the execration; so besides
Mine own that bide upon me, all from me
Shall with a fierce reflux on me redound,
On me as on their natural centre light
Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys
Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!
Did I request thee Maker, from my clay
To mould me man, did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me, or here place
In this delicious garden? as my will
Concurr'd not to my being, it were but right
And equal to reduce me to my dust,
Desirous to resign and render back
All I receiv'd unable to perform
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes? inexplicable
Thy justice seems; yet to say truth, too late
I thus contest; then should have been refus'd
Those terms **whatever**, when they were propos'd
Thou didst accept them: wilt thou enjoy the good,
Then cavil the conditions? and though God
Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son

Prove disobedient, and reprov'd, retort,
Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not :
Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee
That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,
But natural necessity begot.
God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him; thy reward was of his grace,
Thy punishment then justly is at his will.
Be it so, for I submit; his doom is fair,
That dust I am, and shall to dust return.
O welcome hour whenever! why delays
His hand to execute what his decree
Fix'd on this day? why do I overlive,
Why am I mock'd with death, and lengthen'd out
To deathless pain? how gladly would I meet
Mortality my sentence, and be earth
Insensible, how glad would lay me down
As in my mother's lap? there I should rest
And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more
Would thunder in my ears, no fear of worse
To me and to my offspring would torment me
With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt,
Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die,
Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of man
Which God inspir'd, cannot together perish
With this corporeal clod; then in the grave,
Or in some other dismal place, who knows
But shall I die a living death; O thought
Horrid, if true! yet why? It was but breath
Of life that sinn'd; what dies but what had life
And sin? the body properly hath neither.
All of me then shall die: let this appease
The doubt, since human reach no further knows.
For though the Lord of all be infinite,
Is his wrath also? be it, man is not so,
But mortal doom'd. How can he exercise
Wrath without end on man, whom death must end?
Can he make deathless death? that were to make
Strange contradiction, which to God himself

Impossible is held, as argument
Of weakness, not of pow'r. Will he draw out,
For anger's sake, finite to infinite
In punish'd man, to satisfy his rigour
Satisfy'd never? that were to extend
His sentence beyond dust and nature's law,
By which all causes else according still
To the reception of their matter act,
Not to the extent of their own sphere. But say
That death be not one stroke, as I suppos'd,
Bereaving sense, but endless misery
From this day onward, which I feel begun
Both in me, and without me, and so last
To perpetuity; ay me, that fear
Comes thund'ring back with dreadful revolution
On my defenceless head: both death and I
Am found eternal, and incorporate both,
Nor I on my part single, in me all
Posterity stands curs'd: fair patrimony
That I must leave ye, sons; O were I able
To waste it all myself, and leave ye none!
So disinherited how would ye bless
Me now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind
For one man's fault thus guiltless be condemn'd,
If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,
But all corrupt, both mind and will deprav'd,
Not to do only, but to will the same
With me? how can they then acquitted stand
in sight of God? Him after all disputes
Forc'd I absolve: all my evasions vain,
And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still
But to my own conviction: first and last
On me, me only, as the source and spring
Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;
So might the wrath. Fond wish! couldst thou sup-
port
That burden heavier than the earth to bear.
Than all the world much heavier, though divided
With that bad woman? Thus what thou desir'st

And what thou fear'st alike destroys all hope
Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable
Beyond all past example and future,
To Satan only like both crime and doom.
O conscience, into what abyss of fears
And horrors hast thou driven me ; out of which
I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd !

Thus Adam to himself lamented loud
Through the still night, not now, as ere man fell,
Wholesome and cool, and mild, but with black air
Accompanied, with damps and dreadful gloom,
Which to his evil conscience represented
All things with double terror : on the ground
Outstretch'd he lay, on the cold ground, and oft
Curs'd his creation, death as oft accus'd
Of tardy execution, since denounc'd
The day of his offence. Why comes not death,
Said he, with one thrice acceptable stroke
To end me ? shall truth fail to keep her word,
Justice divine not hasten to be just ?
But death comes not at call, justice divine
Mends not her slowest pace for pray'rs or cries.
O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales and bowers,
With other echo late I taught your shades
To answer, and resound far other song.

Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,
Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd :
But her with stern regard he thus repell'd :

Out of my sight, thou serpent ; that name best
Befits thee with him leagu'd, thyself as false
And hateful ; nothing wants, but that thy shape,
Like his, and colour serpentine may show
Thy inward fraud, to warn all creatures from thee
Henceforth ; lest that too heav'nly form, pretended
To hellish falsehood,* snare them. But for thee

* "Pretended to hellish falsehood ;" pretended is used in the Latin sense of held before.

I had persisted happy, had not thy pride
And wand'ring vanity, when least was safe,
Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd
Not to be trusted, longing to be seen
Though by the devil himself, him overweening
To over-reach, but with the serpent meeting,
Fool'd and beguil'd, by him thou, I by thee,
To trust thee from my side, imagin'd wise,
Constant, mature, proof against all assaults,
And understood not all was but a show,
Rather than solid virtue, all but a rib
Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,
More to the part sinister, from me drawn,
Well if thrown out, as supernumerary
To my just number found. O why did God,
Creator wise, that peopled highest heav'n
With spirits masculine, create at last
This novelty on earth, this fair defect
Of nature, and not fill the world at once
With men as angels without feminine,
Or find some other way to generate
Mankind? this mischief had not then befall'n,
And more than shall befall, innumerable
Disturbances on earth through female snares,
And strait conjunction with this sex: for either
He never shall find out fit mate, but such
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake;
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
Through her perverseness, but shall see her gain'd
By a far worse, or if she love, withheld
By parents: or his happiest choice too late
Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock-bound
To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:
Which infinite calamity shall cause
To human life, and household peace confound.
He added not, and from her turn'd; but Eve
Not so repuls'd, with tears that ceas'd not flowing,
And tresses all disorder'd, at his feet

Fell humble, and embracing them, besought
His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.

Forsake me not thus, Adam, witness heav'n
What love sincere, and reverence in my heart
I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
Unhappily deceiv'd; thy suppliant
I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,
Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
Thy counsel in this uttermost distress.
My only strength and stay: forlorn of thee,
Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?
While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
Between us two let there be peace, both joining,
As join'd in injuries, one enmity
Against a foe by doom express assign'd us,
That cruel serpent: on me exercise not
Thy hatred for this misery befall'n,
On me already lost, me than thyself
More miserable; both have sinn'd, but thou
Against God only, I against God and thee,
And to the place of judgment will return,
There with my cries importune heav'n, that all
The sentence from thy head remov'd may light
On me, sole cause to thee of all this wo,
Me, me only, just object of his ire.

She ended weeping, and her lowly plight,
Immoveable till peace obtain'd from fault
Acknowledg'd and deplor'd, in Adam wrought
Commiseration; soon his heart relented
Towards her, his life so late and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress,
Creatures so fair his reconcilment seeking
His counsel, whom she had displeas'd, his aid;
As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost,
And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon.

Unwary, and too desirous, as before,
So now of what thou know'st not who desir'st
The punishment all on thyself; alas,
Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain

His full wrath, whose thou feel'st as yet least part,
And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If prayers
Could alter high decrees, I to that place
Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
That on my head all might be visited,
Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,
To me committed and by me expos'd.
But rise, let us no more contend, nor blame
Each other, blam'd enough elsewhere, but strive
In offices of love, how we may lighten
Each other's burden, in our share of wo ;
Since this day's death denounc'd if ought I see,
Will prove no sudden, but a slow-pac'd evil,
A long day's dying to augment our pain,
And to our seed (O hapless seed !) deriv'd.

To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, reply'd :
Adam, by sad experiment I know
How little weight my words with thee can find,
Found so erroneous, thence by just event
Found so unfortunate ; nevertheless,
Restor'd by thee, vile as I am, to place
Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart
Living or dying, from thee I will not hide
What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen,
Tending to some relief of our extremes,
Or end, though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
As in our evils, and of easier choice.
If care of our descent perplex us most,
Which must be born to certain wo, devour'd
By death at last ; and miserable it is
To be to others cause of misery,
Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
Into this cursed world a woful race,
That after wretched life must be at last
Food for so foul a monster ; in thy power
It lies, yet ere conception, to prevent
The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.
Childless thou art, childless remain : so Death

Shall be deceiv'd his glut, and with us two
Be forc'd to satisfy his ravenous maw.
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
From love's due rites, nuptial embraces sweet,
And with desire to languish without hope,
Before the present object languishing
With like desire, which would be misery
And torment less than none of what we dread :
Then both ourselves and seed at once to free
From what we fear for both, let us make short,
Let us seek Death, or he not found, supply
With our own hands his office on ourselves ;
Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
That show no end but death, and have the power,
Of many ways to die, the shortest choosing,
Destruction with destruction to destroy ?

She ended here, or vehement despair
Broke off the rest ; so much of death her thoughts
Had entertain'd, as dy'd her cheeks with pale.
But Adam with such counsel nothing sway'd,
To better hopes his more attentive mind
Lab'ring had rais'd, and thus to Eve reply'd.

Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
To argue in thee something more sublime
And excellent than what thy mind contemns ;
But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes
That excellence thought in thee, and implies,
Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
For loss of life, and pleasure overlov'd.
Or if thou covet death, as utmost end
Of misery, so thinking to evade
The penalty pronounc'd doubt not but God
Hath wiselier arm'd his vengeful ire than so
To be forestall'd ; much more I fear lest death
So snatch'd will not exempt us from the pain
We are by doom to pay ; rather such acts
Of contumacy will provoke the Highest
To make death in us live ; then let us seek

Some safer resolution, which methinks
I have in view, calling to mind with heed
Part of our sentence, That thy seed shall bruise
The serpent's head ; piteous amends, unless
He meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe
Satan, who in the serpent hath contriv'd
Against us this deceit ; to crush his head
Would be revenge indeed ; which will be lost
By death brought on ourselves, or childless days
Resolv'd as thou proposest : so our foe
Shall 'scape his punishment ordain'd, and we
Instead shall double ours upon our heads.
No more be mention'd then of violence
Against ourselves, and wilful barrenness,
'That cuts us off from hope, and savours only
Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,
Reluctance against God and his just yoke
Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
And gracious temper he both heard and judg'd,
Without wrath or reviling ; we expected
Immediate dissolution, which we thought
Was meant by death that day, when lo, to thee
Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,
And bringing forth, soon recompens'd with joy,
Fruit of thy womb. On me the curse aslope
Glanc'd on the ground ; with labour I must earn
My bread ; what harm ? Idleness had been worse :
My labour will sustain me ; and lest cold
Or heat should injure us, his timely care
Hath unbesought provided, and his hands
Cloth'd us unworthy, pitying while he judg'd ;
How much more, if we pray him, will his ear
Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
And teach us further by what means to shun
Th' inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow
Which now the sky with various face begins
To show us in this mountain, while the winds
Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks
Of these far spreading trees ; which bids us seek

Some better shroud, some better warmth to cherish
Our limbs benumb'd, ere this diurnal star
Leave cold the night, how we his gather'd beams
Reflected, may with matter sere foment,
Or by collision of two bodies grind
The air attrite to fire, as late the clouds
Justling or push'd with winds rude in their shock
Tine the slant lightning,* whose thwart flame driv'n
down

Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine,
And sends a comfortable heat from far,
Which might supply the sun : such fire to use,
And what may else be remedy or cure
To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,
He will instruct us praying, and of grace
Beseeching him, so as we need not fear
To pass commodiously this life, sustain'd
By him with many comforts, till we end
In dust, our final rest and native home.
What better can we do, than to the place
Repairing where he jug'd us, prostrate fall
Before him reverent, and there confess
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek ?
Undoubtedly he will relent and turn
From his displeasure ; in whose look serene,
When angry most he seem'd, and most severe,
What else but favour, grace, and mercy shone ?

So spake our father penitent, nor Eve
Felt less remorse ; they forthwith to the place
Repairing where he judg'd them, prostrate fell
Before him reverent, and both confess'd
Humbly their faults, and pardon begg'd with tears

* *Tine the slant lightning :* an old word for *kindle*.

Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.

END OF THE TENTH BOOK.

THE
ELEVENTH BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE Son of God presents to his Father the prayers of our first parents now repenting, and intercedes for them : God accepts them : but declares that they must no longer abide in Paradise ; sends Michael with a band of cherubim to dispossess them ; but first to reveal to Adam future things : Michael's coming down.—Adam shows to Eve certain ominous signs : he discerns Michael's approach, goes out to meet him : the angel denounces their departure. Eve's lamentation. Adam pleads, but submits : the angel leads him up to a high hill, sets before him in vision what shall happen till the flood.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK XI.

Thus they in lowliest plight repentant stood
Praying, for from the mercy-seat above,
Prevenient grace descending had remov'd
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breath'd
Unutterable, which the spirit of pray'r
Inspir'd, and wing'd for heav'n with speedier flight
Than loudest oratory: yet their port
Not of mean suitors, nor important less
Seem'd their petition, than when the ancient pair
In fables old, less ancient yet than these,
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore
The race of mankind drown'd, before the shrine
Of Themis stood devout. To heav'n their prayers
Flew up, nor miss'd the way, by envious winds
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they pass'd
Dimensionless through heav'nly doors; then clad
With incense, where the golden altar fum'd,
By their great intercessor, came in sight
Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son
Presenting, thus to intercede began:

See, Father, what first fruits on earth are sprung
From thy implanted grace in man, these sighs
And pray'rs, which in this golden censer, mix'd
With incense, I thy priest before thee bring,

Fruits of more pleasing savour from thy seed
Sown with contrition in his heart, than those
Which his own hand manuring all the trees
Of Paradise could have produc'd, ere fall'n
From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear
To supplication, hear his sighs though mute;
Unskilful with what words to pray, let me
Interpret for him, me his advocate
And propitiation; all his works on me
Good or not good ingraft, my merit those
Shall perfect, and for those my death shall pay,
Accept me, and in me from these receive
The smell of peace toward mankind; let him live
Before thee reconcil'd, at least his days
Number'd, though sad, till death, his doom (which I
To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse,)
To better life shall yield him where with me
All my redeem'd may dwell in joy and bliss,
Made one with me as I with thee am one.

To whom the Father, without cloud, serene :
All thy request for man, accepted Son,
Obtain; all thy request was my decree :
But longer in that Paradise to dwell,
The law I gave to nature him forbids:
Those pure immortal elements that know
No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
Eject him tainted now, and purge him off
As a distemper, gross to air as gross,
— And mortal food, as may dispose him best
For dissolution wrought by sin, that first
Distemper'd all things, and of incorrupt
Corrupted. I at first with two fair gifts
Created him, endow'd with happiness
And immortality: that fondly lost,
This other serv'd but to eternize wo;
Till I provided death; so death becomes
His final remedy, and after life
Try'd in sharp tribulation, and refin'd
By faith and faithful works, to second life,
Wak'd in the renovation of the just,

Resigns him up with heav'n and earth renew'd.
But let us call to synod all the blest
Through heav'n's wide bounds ; from them I will not
hide

My judgments, how with mankind I proceed,
As how with peccant angels late they saw,
And in their state, though firm, stood more confirm'd.

He ended, and the Son gave signal high
To the bright minister that watch'd ; he blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since, perhaps
When God descended, and perhaps once more
To sound at general doom. Th' angelic blast
Fill'd all the regions : from their blissful bowers
Of amaranthine shade, fountain or spring,
By the waters of life, where'er they sat
In fellowships of joy, the sons of light
Hasted, resorting to the summons high,
And took their seats ; till from his throne supreme
Th' Almighty thus pronounc'd his sov'reign will :

O sons, like one of us man is become
To know both good and evil, since his taste
Of that defended fruit ; but let him boast
His knowledge of good lost, and evil got,
Happier, had it suffic'd him to have known
Good by itself, and evil not at all.
He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite,
My motions in him ; longer than they move,
His heart I know, how variable and vain
Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand
Reach also of the tree of life, and eat,
And live for ever, dream at least to live
For ever, to remove him I decree,
And send him from the garden forth to till
The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.

Michael, this my behest have thou in charge,
Take to thee from among the cherubim
Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the fiend,
Or in behalf of man, or to invade
Vacant possession, some new trouble raise :

Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God
Without remorse drive out the sinful pair
From hallow'd ground th' unholy, and denounce
To them and to their progeny from thence
Perpetual banishment. Yet lest they faint
At the sad sentence rigorously urg'd,
For I behold them soften'd, and with tears
Bewailing their excess, all terror hide.
If patiently thy bidding they obey,
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal
To Adam what shall come in future days,
As I shall thee enlighten; intermix
My covenant in the woman's seed renew'd;
So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace.
And on the east side of the garden place,
Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
Cherubic watch, and of a sword the flame
Wide-waving, all approach far off to fright,
And guard all passage to the tree of life:
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
To spirits foul, and all my trees their prey,
With whose stol'n fruit man once more to delude
He ceas'd; and th' archangelic pow'r prepar'd
For swift descent, with him the cohort bright
Of watchful cherubim: four faces each
Had, like a double Janus, all their shape
Spangled with eyes, more numerous than those
Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse.
Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the past'ral reed
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Meanwhile
To re-salute the world with sacred light
Leucothea wak'd, and with fresh dews embalm'd
The earth, when Adam and first matron Eve
Had ended now their orisons, and found
Strength added from above, new hope to spring
Out of despair, joy, but with fear yet link'd;
Which thus to Eve his welcome words renew'd:
Eve, easily may faith admit, that all
The good which we enjoy, from heav'n descends;

But that from us aught should ascend to heav'n
So prevalent as to concern the mind
Of God, high-blest, or to incline his will,
Hard to belief may seem ; yet this will prayer,
Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne
Ev'n to the seat of God. For since I sought
By pray'r th' offended Deity, t' appease,
Kneel'd and before him humbled all my heart,
Methought I saw him placable and mild,
Bending his ear ; persuasion in me grew
That I was heard with favour ; peace return'd
Home to my breast, and to my memory
His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe :
Which then not minded in dismay, yet now
Assures me that the bitterness of death
Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee,
Eve rightly call'd mother of all mankind,
Mother of all things living, since by thee
Man is to live, and all things live for man.

To whom thus Eve with sad demeanour meek :
Ill worthy I such title should belong
To me transgressor, who for thee ordain'd
A help, became thy snare ; to me reproach
Rather belongs, distrust and all dispraise :
But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
That I who first brought death on all, am grac'd
The source of life ; next favourable thou,
Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsaf'st,
Far other name deserving. But the field
To labour calls us now with sweat impos'd,
Though after sleepless night ; for see the morn,
All unconcerned with our unrest, begins
Her rosy progress smiling ; let us forth,
I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoind
Laborious, till day droop ; while here we dwell,
What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks ?
Here let us live, though in fall'n state, content.

So spake, so wish'd much humbled Eve, but fate
Subscrib'd not; Nature first gave signs, impress'd
On bird, beast, air, air suddenly eclips'd
After short blush of morn; nigh in her sight
The bird of Jove, stoop'd from his airy tour,
Two birds of gayest plume before him drove:
Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,
First hunter then, pursu'd a gentle brace,
Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;
Direct to th' eastern gate was bent their flight.
Adam observ'd, and with his eye the chace
Pursuing, not unmov'd to Eve thus spake:

O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,
Which heav'n by these mute signs in nature shows,
Forerunners of his purpose, or to warn
Us haply too secure of our discharge
From penalty, because from death releas'd
Some days; how long, and what till then our life,
Who knows, or more than this, that we are dust,
And thither must return and be no more?
Why else this double object in our sight
Of flight pursu'd in th' air, and o'er the ground,
One way the self-same hour? why in the east
Darkness ere day's mid course, and morning light
More orient in yon western cloud, that draws
O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,
And slow descends, with something heav'nly fraught?

He err'd not, for by this the heav'nly bands
Down from a sky of jasper lighted now
In Paradise, and on a hill made halt,
A glorious apparition, had not doubt
And carnal fear that day dimm'd Adam's eye.
Not that more glorious, when the angels met
Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw
The field pavilion'd with his guardians bright.
Nor that which on the flaming mount appear'd
In Dothan, cover'd with a camp of fire,
Against the Syrian king, who to surprise
One man, assassin like, had levied war,

War unproclaim'd. The princely hierach
In their bright stand there left his pow'rs to seize
Possession of the garden ; he alone,
To find where Adam shelter'd took his way,
Not unperceiv'd of Adam, who to Eve,
While the great visitant approach'd, thus spake :

Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
Of us will soon determine, or impose
New laws to be observ'd ; for I descry
From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hills,
One of the heav'nly host, and by his gait
None of the meanest, some great potentate,
Or of the thrones above, such majesty
Invests him coming ; yet not terrible,
That I should fear, nor sociably mild,
As Raphael, that I should much confide,
But solemn and sublime, whom not t' offend,
With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.

He ended ; and th' archangel soon drew nigh,
Not in his shape celestial, but as man
Clad to meet man ; over his lucid arms
A military vest of purple flow'd,
Livelier than Melibœan, or the grain
Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old,
In time of truce ; Iris had dipt the woof ;
His starry helm unbuckled show'd him prime
In manhood where youth ended ; by his side
As in a glist'ring zodiac hung the sword,
Satan's dire dread, and in his hand the spear.
Adam bow'd low ; he kingly from his state
Inclin'd not, but his coming thus declar'd :

Adam, heav'n's high behest no preface needs
Sufficient that thy pray'rs are heard, and Death
Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
Defeated of his seizure, many days
Giv'n thee of grace, wherein thou mayst repent,
And one bad act, with many deeds well done,
Mayst cover : well may then thy Lord appeas'd,
Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim ;

But longer in this Paradise to dwell
Permits not ; to remove thee I am come,
And send thee from the garden forth to till
The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.

He added not, for Adam at the news
Heart-struck with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,
That all his senses bound ; Eve, who unseen
Yet all had heard, with audible lament
Discover'd soon the place of her retire.

O unexpected stroke, worse than of Death !
Must I thus leave thee, Paradise ? thus leave
Thee, native soil, these happy walks and shades,
Fit haunt of gods ? where I had hope to spend,
Quiet though sad, the respite of that day
That must be mortal to us both. O flowers,
That never will in other climate grow,
My early visitation, and my last
At even, which I bred up with tender hand
From the first opening bud, and gave ye names,
Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount ?
Thee lastly, nuptial bow'r, by me adorn'd
With what to sight or smell was sweet, from thee
How shall I part, and whither wander down
Into a lower world, to this obscure
And wild ? how shall we breathe in other air
Less pure, accustom'd to immortal fruits ?

Whom thus the angel interrupted mild :
Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign
What justly thou hast lost ; nor set thy heart,
Thus over fond, on that which is not thine ;
Thy going is not lonely ; with thee goes
Thy husband ; him to follow thou art bound ;
Where he abides, think there thy native soil.

Adam by this, from the cold sudden damp
Recovering, and his scatter'd spirits return'd,
To Michael thus his humble words address'd :
Celestial, whether among the thrones, or nam'd
Of them the highest, for such of shape may seem

Prince above princes, gently hast thou told
Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
And in performing end us ; what besides
Of sorrow and dejection, and despair
Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring,
Departure from this happy place our sweet
Recess, and only consolation left
Familiar to our eyes, all places else
Inhospitable appear, and desolate,
For knowing us nor known : and if by prayer
Incessant I could hope to change the will
Of him who all things can, I would not cease
To weary him with my assiduous cries :
But pray'r against his absolute decree,
No more avails than breath against the wind,
Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth :
Therefore to his great bidding I submit.
This most afflicts me, that departing hence,
As from his face I shall be hid, depriv'd
His blessed count'nance ; here I could frequent
With worship place by place where he vouchsaf'd
Presence divine, and to my sons relate,
On this mount he appear'd, under this tree
Stood visible, among these pines his voice
I heard, here with him at this fountain talk'd ;
So many grateful altars I would rear
Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
Of lustre from the brook, in memory,
Or monument to ages, and thereon
Offer sweet smelling gums and fruits and flowers ;
In yonder nether world where shall I seek
His bright appearances, or foot-step trace ?
For though I fled him angry, yet recall'd
To life prolong'd, and promis'd race, I now
Gladly behold, though but his utmost skirts
Of glory, and far off his steps adore.

To whom thus Michael with regard benign :
Adam, thou know'st heav'n his, and all the earth,
Not this rock only ; his omnipresence fills

Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
Fomented by his virtual pow'r, and warm'd :
All th' earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
No despicable gift ; surmise not then
His presence to these narrow bounds confin'd,
Of Paradise or Eden ; this had been
Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
All generations, and had hither come
From all the ends of th' earth, to celebrate
And reverence thee their great progenitor.
But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down
To dwell on even ground now with thy sons :
Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain
God is as here, and will be found alike
Present, and of his presence many a sign
Still following thee, still compassing thee round
With goodness and paternal love, his face
Express, and of his steps the track divine.
Which that thou mayst believe, and be confirm'd
Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent
To show thee what shall come in future days
To thee and to thy offspring ; good with bad
Expect to hear, supernal grace contending
With sinfulness of men ; thereby to learn
True patience, and to temper joy with fear
And pious sorrow, equally inur'd
By moderation either state to bear,
Prosperous or adverse ; so shalt thou lead
Safest thy life, and best prepar'd endure
Thy mortal passage when it comes Ascend
This hill ; let Eve (for I have drench'd her eyes)
Here sleep below, while thou to foresight wak'st ;
As once thou slept'st, while she to life was form'd.

To whom thus Adam gratefully reply'd :
Ascend, I follow thee, safe guide, the path
Thou lead'st me, and to the hand of heav'n submit,
However chast'ning, to the evil turn
My obvious breast, arming to overcome
By suffering, and earn rest from labour won,

If so I may attain. So both ascend
In the visions of God: it was a hill
Of Paradise the highest, from whose top
The hemisphere of earth in clearest ken
Stretch'd out to th' amplest reach of prospect lay.
Not higher that hill nor wider looking round,
Whereon for different cause the tempter set
Our second Adam in the wilderness,
To show him all earth's kingdoms and their glory.
His eye might there command wherever stood
City of old or modern fame, the seat
Of mightiest empire, from the destin'd walls
Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,
And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,
To Paquin of Sinæan kings, and thence
To Agra and Lahor of great Mogul
Down to the golden Chersonese, or where
The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since
In Hispahan, or where the Russian czar
In Moscow, or the sultan in Bizance,
Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken
Th' empire of Negus to his utmost port
Ercocco, and the less maratime kings,
Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,
And Sofala, thought Ophir, to the realm
Of Congo, and Angola farthest south;
Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount,
The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,
Morocco and Algiers, and Tremisen;
On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway
The world; in spirit perhaps he also saw
Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezuma,
And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoil'd
Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons
Call El Dorado: but to nobler sights
Michael from Adam's eyes the film remov'd,
Which that false fruit, that promis'd clearer sight,
Had bred; then purg'd with euphrasy and rue

The visual nerve, for he had much to see ;
And from the well of life three drops instill'd.
So deep the pow'r of these ingredients pierc'd,
Ev'n to the inmost seat of mental sight,
That Adam now enforc'd to close his eyes,
Sunk down, and all his spirits became entranc'd ;
But him the gentle angel by the hand
Soon rais'd, and his attention thus recall'd :

Adam, now ope thine eyes, and first behold
Th' effects which thy original crime hath wrought
In some to spring from thee, who never touch'd
Th' excepted tree, nor with the snake conspir'd,
Nor sinn'd thy sin, yet from that sin derive
Corruption to bring forth more violent deeds.

His eyes he open'd, and beheld a field,
Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves
New reap'd, the other part sheep-walks and folds ,
I' th' midst an altar as the land-mark stood,
Rustic, of grassy sord ; thither anon
A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought
First fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf
Uncull'd as came to hand ; a shepherd next
More meek came with the firstlings of his flock
Choicest and best ; then sacrificing, laid
The inwards and their fat, with incense strow'd,
On the cleft wood, and all due rites perform'd.
His offering soon propitious fire from heav'n
Consum'd with nimble glance, and grateful stream ;
The other's not, for his was not sincere ;
Whereat he inly rag'd, and as they talk'd,
Smote him into the midrift with a stone
That beat out life ; he fell, and deadly pale
Groan'd out his soul with gushing blood effus'd.
Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
Dismay'd, and thus in haste to th' angel cry'd :

O teacher, some great mischief hath befall'n
To that meek man, who well had sacrific'd :
Is piety thus and pure devotion paid ?

T' whom Michael thus, he also mov'd reply'd:
These two are brethren, Adam, and to come
Out of thy loins; th' unjust the just hath slain,
For envy that his brother's offering found
From heav'n, acceptance; but the bloody fact
Will be aveng'd, and the other's faith approv'd
Lose no rewards; though here thou see him die,
Rolling in dust and gore. To which our sire:

Alas! both for the deed, and for the cause!
But have I now seen Death? Is this the way
I must return to native dust? O sight
Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,
Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!

To whom thus Michael: Death thou hast seen
In his first shape on man; but many shapes
Of Death, and many are the ways that lead
To his grim cave, all dismal; yet to sense
More terrible at th' entrance than within.
Some as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die,
By fire, flood, famine; by intemp'rance more
In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring
Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
Before thee shall appear; that thou mayst know
What misery th' inabstinence of Eve
Shall bring on men. Immediately a place
Before his eyes appear'd, sad, noisome, dark,
A lazarus-house it seem'd, wherein were laid
Numbers of all diseases, all maladies,
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms,
Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
Intestine stone and ulcer, colick-pangs,
Demonic phrenzy, moping melancholy,
And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,
Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.
Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair
Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch;
And over them triumphant Death his dart

Shook, but delay'd to strike, though oft invoc'd
With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.
Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
Dry-ey'd behold? Adam could not, but wept,
Though not of woman born: compassion quell'd
His best of man, and gave him up to tears
A space, till firmer thoughts restrain'd excess;
And scarce recovering words his plaint renew'd:

O miserable mankind, to what fall
Degraded, to what wretched state reserv'd?
Better end here unborn. Why is life given
To be thus wrested from us? rather why
Obtruded on us thus? who if we knew
What we receive, would either not accept
Life offer'd, or soon beg to lay it down,
Glad to be so dismiss'd in peace. Can thus
Th' image of God in man created once
So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
To such unsightly sufferings be debas'd
Under inhuman pains? Why should not man,
Retaining still divine similitude
In part, from such deformities be free,
And for his Maker's image sake exempt?

Their Maker's image, answer'd Michael, then
Forsook them, when themselves they vilify'd
To serve ungovern'd appetite, and took
His image whom they serv'd, a brutish vice,
Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.
Therefore so abject is their punishment,
Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own,
Or if his likeness, by themselves defac'd,
While they pervert pure nature's healthful rules
To loathsome sickness, worthily, since they
God's image did not reverence in themselves.

I yield it just, said Adam, and submit.
But is there yet no other way, besides
These painful passages how we may come
To death, and mix with our connatural dust?

There is, said Michael, if thou well observe
The rule of not too much, by temp'rance taught,
In what thou eat'st and drink'st, seeking from thence
Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
Till many years over thy head return :
So may'st thou live, till like ripe fruit thou drop
Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease
Gather'd, not harshly pluck'd, for death mature :
This is old age : but then thou must outlive
Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will
change

To wither'd, weak and grey : thy senses then
Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,
To what thou hast ; and for the air of youth,
Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
A melancholy damp of cold and dry
To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume
The balm of life. To whom our ancestor :

Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong
Life much, bent rather how I may be quit
Fairest and easiest of this cumbrous charge,
Which I must keep till my appointed day
Of rend'ring up, and patiently attend
My dissolution. Michael reply'd :
Nor love thy life, nor hate ; but what thou liv'st
Live well, how long or short permit to heav'n :
And now prepare thee for another sight.

He look'd, and saw a spacious plain, whereon
Were tents of various hue ; by some were herds
Of cattle grazing : others, whence the sound
Of instruments that made melodious chime
Was heard, of harp and organ ; and who mov'd
Their stops and chords was seen ; his volant touch
Instinct through all proportions low and high,
Fled and pursu'd transverse the resonant fugue.
In other part stood one who at the forge
Lab'ring two massy clods of iron and brass
Had melted, (whether found where casual fire
Had wasted woods on mountain, or in vale,

Down to the veins of earth, thence gliding hot
To some cave's mouth, or whether wash'd by stream
From under ground,) the liquid ore he drain'd
Into fit moulds prepar'd; from which he form'd
First his own tools; then, what might else be wrought
Fusil or grav'n in metal. After these,
But on the hither side, a different sort
From the high neighb'ring hills, which was their seat,
Down to the plain descending: by their guise
Just men they seem'd, and all their study bent
To worship God aright, and know his works
Not hid, nor those things last which might preserve
Freedom and peace to men; they on the plain
Long had not walk'd, when from the tents behold
A bevy of fair women, richly gay
In gems and wanton dress; to th' harp they sung
Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on;
The men though grave, ey'd them, and let their eyes
Rove without rein, till in the amorous net
Fast caught, they lik'd, and each his liking chose;
And now of love they treat, till th' evning star,
Love's harbinger, appear'd; then all in heat
They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke
Hymen, then first to marriage rites invok'd:
With feast and music all the tents resound.
Such happy interview and fair event
Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flow'rs,
And charming symphonies attach'd the heart,
Of Adam, soon inclin'd t' admit delight,
The bent of nature; which he thus express'd:
True opener of mine eyes, prime angel blest,
Much better seems this vision, and more hope
Of peaceful days portends, than those two past;
Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse,
Here nature seems fulfill'd in all her ends.

To whom thus Michael: Judge not what is best
By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet,
Created, as thou art, to nobler end
Holy and pure, conformity divine.

Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents
Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
Who slew his brother ; studious they appear
Of arts that polish life, inventors rare,
Unmindful of their Maker, though his spirit
Taught them, but they his gifts acknowledg'd none ;
Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget ;
For that fair female troop thou saws't, that seem'd
Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,
Yet empty of all good wherein consists
Woman's domestic honour and chief praise ;
Bred only and completed to the taste
Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance,
To dress, and trol the tongue, and roll the eye.
To these that sober race of men, whose lives
Religious titled them the sons of God,
Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame
Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles
Of these fair atheists, and now swim in joy,
Ere long to swim at large ; and laugh, for which
The world ere long a world of tears must weep.

To whom thus Adam of short joy bereft :
O pity and shame, that they who to live well
Enter'd so fair should turn aside to tread,
Paths indirect, or in the mid way faint !
But still I see the tenor of man's wo
Holds on the same, from woman to begin.

From man's effeminate slackness it begins,
Said the angel, who should better hold his place
By wisdom, and superior gifts receiv'd.
But now prepare thee for another scene.

He look'd, and saw wide territory spread
Before him, towns, and rural works between,
Cities of men with lofty gates and tow'rs,
Concourse in arms, fierce faces threat'ning war,
Giants of mighty bone, and bold emprise ;
Part weild their arms, part curb the foaming steed,
Single, or in array of battle rang'd
Both horse and foot, nor idly must'ring stood

One way a band select from forage drives
A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine
From a fat meadow ground ; or fleecy flock,
Ewes and their bleating lambs over the plain,
Their booty ; scarce with life the shepherds fly,
But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray :
With cruel tournament the squadrons join ;
Where cattle pastur'd late, now scatter'd lies
With carcasses and arms th' ensanguin'd field
Deserted : others to a city strong
Lay siege, encamp'd ; by battery, scale, and mine,
Assaulting ; others from the wall defend
With dart and javelin, stones and sulphurous fire ;
On each hand slaughter and gigantic deeds.
In other part the sceptred heralds call
To council in the city gates : anon
Grey-headed men and grave, with warriors mix'd,
Assemble, and harangues are heard, but soon
In factious opposition, till at last
Of middle age one rising, eminent
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
Of justice, of religion, truth and peace,
And judgment from above : him old and young
Exploded and had seiz'd with violent hands,
Had not a cloud descending snatch'd him thence
Unseen amid the throng : so violence
Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law
Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.
Adam was all in tears, and to his guide
Lamenting turn'd full sad : O what are these,
Death's ministers, not men, who thus deal death
Inhumanly to men, and multiply
Ten thousand fold the sin of him who slew
His brother ; for of whom such massacre
Make they but of their brethren, men of men ?
But who was that just man, whom had not heav'n
Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost ?

To whom thus Michael : These are the product
Of those ill-mated marriages thou saw'st ;

Where good with bad were match'd, who of themselves

Abhor to join ; and by imprudence mix'd,
Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
Such were these giants, men of high renown ;
For in those days might only shall be admir'd,
And valour and heroic virtue call'd ;
To overcome in battle, and subdue
Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
Of human glory, and for glory done
Of triumph, to be stil'd great conquerors,
Patrons of mankind, gods, and sons of gods,
Destroyers rightlier call'd and plagues of men.
Thus fame shall be achiev'd, renown on earth,
And what most merits fame in silence hid.
But he the sev'nth from thee, whom thou beheldst
The only righteous in a world perverse,
And therefore hated, therefore so beset
With foes for daring single to be just,
And utter odious truth, that God would come
To judge them with his saints : him the most
Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds
Did, as thou saw'st, receive, to walk with God
High in salvation and the climes of bliss,
Exempt from death ; to show thee what reward
Awaits the good, the rest what punishment ;
Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold.

He look'd, and saw the face of things quite chang'd ;
The brazen throat of war had ceas'd to roar ;
All now was turn'd to jollity and game,
To luxury and riot, feast and dance,
Marrying or prostituting, as befel,
Rape or adultery, where passing fair
Allur'd them ; thence from cups to civil broils.
At length a reverend sire among them came,
And of their doings great dislike declar'd,
And testify'd against their ways ; he oft
Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,

Triumphs or festivals, and to them preach'd
Conversion and repentance, as to souls
In prison under judgments imminent :
But all in vain : which when he saw, he ceas'd
Contending, and remov'd his tents far off ;
Then from the mountain hewing timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk,
Measur'd by cubit, length, and breadth, and height,
Smear'd round with pitch, and in the side a door
Contriv'd, and of provisions laid in, large
For man and beast : when lo a wonder strange !
Of every beast, and bird, and insect small
Came sev'ns, and pairs, and enter'd in, as taught
Their order : last the sire, and his three sons
With their four wives ; and God made fast the door.
Meanwhile the south wind rose, and with black wings
Wide hovering, all the clouds together drove
From under heav'n ; the hills to their supply
Vapour, and exhalation dusk and moist,
Sent up amain ; and now the thicken'd sky
Like a dark ceiling stood ; down rush'd the rain
Impetuous, and continued till the earth
No more was seen ; the floating vessel swum
Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow
Rode tilting o'er the waves ; all dwellings else
Flood overwhelm'd, and them with all their pomp
Deep under water roll'd ; sea cover'd sea,
Sea without shore ; and in their palaces
Where luxury late reign'd, sea monsters whelp'd
And stabled ; of mankind, so numerous late,
All left, in one small bottom swum embark'd.
How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
The end of all thy offspring, and so sad
Depopulation ! thee another flood,
Of tears and sorrow a flood thee also drown'd,
And sunk thee as thy sons ; till gently rear'd
By th' angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
Though comfortless, as when a father mourns

His children, all in view destroy'd at once :
And scarce to th' angel utter'dst thus thy plaint :

O visions ill foreseen ! better had I
Liv'd ignorant of future, so had borne
My part of evil only, each day's lot
Enough to bear ; those now, that were dispens'd
The burden of many ages, on me light
At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth
Adversive, to torment me ere their being,
With thought that they must be. Let no man seek
Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall
Him or his children ; evil he may be sure,
Which neither his foreknowing can prevent,
And he the future evil shall no less
In apprehension than in substance feel
Grievous to bear : but that care now is past,
Man is not whom to warn : those few escap'd
Famine and anguish will at last consume
Wand'ring that wat'ry desert : I had hope
When violence was ceas'd, and war on earth,
All would have then gone well, peace would have
crown'd

With length of happy days the race of man ;
But I was far deceiv'd ; for now I see
Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
How comes it thus ? unfold, celestial guide,
And whether here the race of man will end.

To whom thus Michael : Those whom last 'hou
saw'st

In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they
First seen in acts of prowess eminent
And great exploits, but of true virtue void ;
Who having spilt much blood, and done much waste
Subduing nations, and achieved thereby
Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey,
Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,
Surfeit, and lust, till wantonness and pride
Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
The conquer'd also, and enslav'd by war

Shall with their freedom lost, all virtue lose
And fear of God, from whom their piety feign'd
In sharp contest of battle found no aid
Against invaders ; therefore cool'd in zeal,
Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,
Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords
Shall leave them to enjoy ; for th' earth shall bear
More than enough, that temp'rance may be try'd ;
So all shall turn degenerate, all deprav'd,
Justice and temp'rance, truth and faith forgot ;
One man except, the only son of light
In a dark age, against example good,
Against allurement, custom, and a world
Offended ; fearless of reproach and scorn,
Or violence, he of their wicked ways
Shall them admonish, and before them set
The paths of righteousness, how much more ~~a~~ safe,
And full of peace, denouncing wrath to come
On their impenitence ; and shall return
Of them derided, but of God observ'd
The one just man alive ; by his command
Shall build a wond'rous ark, as thou beheld'st
To save himself and household from amidst
A world devote to universal wrack
No sooner he with them of man and beast
Select for life shall in the ark be lodg'd,
And shelter'd round, but all the cataracts
Of heav'n set open, on the earth shall pour
Rain day and night ; all fountains of the deep
Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
Beyond all bounds, till inundations rise
Above the highest hills : then shall this mount
Of Paradise by might of waves be mov'd
Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood,
With all his verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift,
Down the great river to the opening gulf,
And there take root an island salt and bare,
The haunt of seals, and orcs, and sea-mews clang :
To teach thee that God attributes to place

No sanctity, if none be thither brought
By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
And now what further shall ensue, behold !

He look'd, and saw the ark hull on the flood,
Which now abated ; for the clouds were fled,
Driv'n by a keen north wind, that blowing dry
Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decay'd ;
And the clear sun on his wide wat'ry glass
Gaz'd hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew
As after thirst, which made their flowing shrink
From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
With soft foot towards the deep, who now had stopt
His sluices, as the heav'n his windows shut.
The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground
Fast on the top of some high mountain fix'd.
And now the tops of hills as rocks appear :
With clamour thence the rapid currents drive
Towards the retreating sea their furious tide.
Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies,
And after him, the surer messenger,
A dove sent forth once and again to spy
Green tree or ground whereon his foot may light
The second time returning, in his bill
An olive leaf he brings, pacific sign :
Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
The ancient sire descends with all his train ;
Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,
Grateful to heav'n, over his head beholds
A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow
Conspicuous with three listed colours gay,
Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.
Whereat the heart of Adam erst so sad
Greatly rejoic'd, and thus his joy broke forth :

O thou who future things canst represent
As present, heav'nly instructor, I revive
At this last sight, assur'd that man shall live
With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.
Far less I now lament for one whole world
Of wicked sons destroy'd, than I rejoice

For one man found so perfect and so just,
That God vouchsafes to raise another world
From him, and all his anger to forget.
But say, what mean those colour'd streaks in heav'n
Distended as the brow of God appeas'd?
Or serve they as a flow'ry verge to bind
The fluid skirts of that same wat'ry cloud,
Lest it again dissolve and show'r the earth?

T' whom th' archangel: Dext'rously thou aim'st,
So willingly doth God remit his ire,
Though late repenting him of man deprav'd
Griev'd at his heart, when looking down he saw
The whole earth fill'd with violence, and all flesh
Corrupting each their way; yet those remov'd,
Such grace shall one just man find in his sight,
That he relents, not to blot out mankind,
And makes a covenant never to destroy
The earth again by flood, nor let the sea
Surpass his bounds, nor rain to drown the world
With man therein, or beast; but when he brings
Over the earth a cloud, will therein set
His triple-colour'd bow, whereon to look
And call to mind his covenant; day and night,
Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost
Shall hold their course, till fire purge all things new,
Both heav'n and earth, wherein the just shall dwell.

END OF THE ELEVENTH BOOK.

THE
TWELFTH BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE angel Michael continues from the flood to relate what shall succeed; then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain, who that seed of the woman shall be, which was promised Adam and Eve in the fall; his incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension; the state of the church till his second coming. Adam greatly satisfied and recomforted by these relations and promises, descends the hill with Michael; wakens Eve, who all this while had slept, but with gentle dreams composed to quietness of mind, and submission. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery sword waving behind them, and the cherubim, taking their stations to guard the place.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK XII.

As one who in his journey bates at noon,
Though bent on speed ; so here the archangel paus'd
Betwixt the world destroy'd, and world restor'd,
If Adam aught perhaps might interpose ;
Then with transition sweet new speech resumes
Thus thou hast seen one world begin and end
And man as from a second stock proceed.
Much thou hast yet to see, but I perceive
Thy mortal sight to fail ; objects divine
Must needs impair, and weary human sense :
Henceforth what is to come I will relate,
Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.
This second source of men, while yet but few,
And while the dread of judgment past remains
Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity,
With some regard to what is just and right
Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace,
Lab'ring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
Corn, wine and oil ; and from the herd or flock,
Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid,
With large wine-offerings pour'd and sacred feast,
Shall spend their days in joy unblam'd, and dwell
Long time in peace, by families and tribes
Under paternal rule : tili one shall rise
Of proud ambitious heart, who not content

With fair equality, fraternal state,
Will arrogate dominion undeserv'd
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
Concord and law of nature from the earth,
Hunting (and men, not beasts, shall be his game,)
With war and hostile snare such as refuse
Subjection to his empire tyrannous :
A mighty hunter thence he shall be styl'd
Before the Lord, as in despite of heav'n,
Or from heav'n claiming second sov'reignty ;
And from rebellion shall derive his name,
Though of rebellion others he accuse.
He with a crew, whom like ambition joins
With him or under him to tyrannize,
Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find
The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge
Boils out from under ground, the mouth of hell :
Of brick, and of that stuff they cast to build
A city and tow'r, whose top may reach to heav'n ;
And get themselves a name, lest far dispers'd
In foreign lands their memory be lost,
Regardless whether good or evil fame.
But God who oft descends to visit men
Unseen, and through their habitations walks
To mark their doings, them beholding soon,
Comes down to see their city, ere the tower
Obstruct heav'n-tow'rs, and in derision sets
Upon their tongues a various spirit to raze
Quite out their native language, and instead
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown :
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud
Among the builders ; each to other calls
Not undersood, till hoarse, and all in rage,
As mock'd they storm ; great laughter was in heav'n
And looking down to see the hubbub strange,
And hear the din ; thus was the building left
Ridiculous, and the work Confusion nam'd.
Whereto thus Adam fatherly displeas'd :
O execrable son so to aspire

Above his brethren, to himself assuming
Authority usurp'd, from God not given :
He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
Dominion absolute, that right we hold
By his donation ; but man over men
He made not lord ; such title to himself
Reserving, human left from human free.
But this usurper his encroachment proud
Stays not on man ; to God his tow'r intends
Siege and defiance : wretched man ! what food
Will he convey up thither to sustain
Himself and his rash army, where thin air
Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,
And famish him of breath, if not of bread ?

To whom thus Michael : Justly thou abhorr'st
That son, who on the quiet state of men
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
Rational liberty ; yet know withal,
Since thy original lapse, true liberty
Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
Twinn'd, and from her hath no dividual being :
Reason in man obscur'd, or not obey'd,
Immediately inordinate desires
And upstart passions catch the government
From reason, and to servitude reduce
Man till then free. Therefore since he permits
Within himself unworthy pow'rs to reign
Over free reason, God in judgment just
Subjects him from without to violent lords ;
Who oft as undeservedly inthral
His outward freedom ; tyranny must be,
Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,
But justice, and some fatal curse annex'd
Deprives them of their outward liberty,
Their inward lost ; witness th' irreverent son
Of him who built the ark, who for the shame
Done to his father heard this heavy curse,

Servant of servants, on his vicious race.
Thus will this latter, as the former world,
Still tend from bad to worse, till God at last
Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
His presence from among them, and avert
His holy eyes: resolving from thenceforth
To leave them to their own polluted ways;
And one peculiar nation to select
From all the rest, of whom to be invok'd,
A nation from one faithful man to spring;
Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,
Bred up in idol worship; O that men
(Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,
While yet the patriarch liv'd, who 'scap'd the flood,
As to forsake the living God, and fall
To worship their own work in wood and stone
For gods! yet him God the most high vouchsafes
To call by vision from his father's house,
His kindred and false gods, into a land
Which he will show him, and from him will raise
A mighty nation, and upon him shower
His benediction so, that in his seed
All nations shall be blest; he straight obeys,
Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes:
I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith
He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil
Ur of Chaldea, passing now the ford
To Haran, after him a cumberous train
Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude;
Not wand'ring poor, but trusting all his wealth
With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.
Canaan he now attains; I see his tents
Pitch'd about Sechem, and the neighb'ring plain
Of Moreh; there by promise he receives
Gift to his progeny of all that land,
From Hamath northward to the desert south,
(Things by their names I call, though yet unnam'd.)
From Hermon east to the great western sea;
Mount Hermon, yonder sea, each place behold

In prospect, as I point them : on the shore
Mount Carmel ; here the double-founted stream
Jordan, true limit eastward ; but his sons
Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.
This ponder, that all nations of the earth
Shall in his seed be blessed ; by that seed
Is meant thy great Deliverer, who shall bruise
The serpent's head ; whereof to thee anon
Plainlier shall be reveal'd. This patriarch blest
Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,
A son, and of his son a granchild leaves,
Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown ;
The granchild with twelve sons increas'd departs
From Canaan, to a land hereafter call'd
Egypt, divided by the river Nile ;
See where it flows, disgorging at sev'n mouths
Into the sea : to sojourn in that land
He comes invited by a younger son
In time of dearth, a son whose worthy deeds
Raise him to be the second in that realm
Of Pharaoh : there he dies, and leaves his race
Growing into a nation, and now grown
Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks
To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests
Too numerous ; whence of guests he makes them slaves
Inhospitably, and kills their infant males :
Till by two brethren (those two brethren call
Moses and Aaron,) sent them from God to claim
His people from enthralment, they return
With glory and spoil back to their promis'd land.
But first the lawless tyrant, who denies
To know their God, or message to regard,
Must be compell'd by signs and judgments dire :
To blood unshed the rivers must be turn'd ;
Frogs, lice, and flies, must all his palace fill
With loath'd intrusion, and fill all the land ;
His cattle must of rot and murrain die ;
Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss,
And all his people ; thunder mix'd with hail,

Hail mix'd with fire, must rend th' Egyptian sky,
And wheel on th' earth, devouring where it rolls;
What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;
Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
Palpable darkness, and blot out three days:
Last with one midnight stroke all the first-born
Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds
The river-dragon tam'd at length submits
To let his sojourners depart, and oft
Humbles his stubborn heart, but still as ice
More harden'd after thaw, till in his rage
Pursuing whom he late dismiss'd, the sea
Swallows him with his host, but them lets pass
As on dry land, between two crystal walls,
Aw'd by the rod of Moses so to stand
Divided, till his rescu'd gain their shore:
Such wondrous pow'r God to his saint will lend,
Though present in his angel, who shall go
Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire,
By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire,
To guide them in their journey, and remove
Behind them, while th' obdurate king pursues:
All night he will pursue, but his approach
Darkness defends between till morning watch:
Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud,
God looking forth will trouble all his host,
And craze their chariot wheels: when by command
Moses once more his potent rod extends
Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;
On their embattled ranks the waves return,
And overwhelm their war: the race elect
Safe towards Canaan from the shore advance
Through the wild desert, not the readiest way,
Lest ent'ring on the Canaanite alarm'd
War terrify them inexpert, and fear
Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather
Inglorious life with servitude; for life

To noble and ignoble is more sweet
Untrain'd in arms, where rashness leads not on.
This also shall they gain by their delay
In the wide wilderness; there they shall found
Their government, and their great senate choose
Through the twelve tribes to rule by laws ordain'd.
God from the mount of Sinai, whose grey top
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpet's sound,
Ordain them laws; part such as appertain
To civil justice, part religious rites
Of sacrifice, informing them by types
And shadows, of that destin'd seed to bruise
The serpent, by what means he shall achieve
Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God
To mortal ear is dreadful; they beseech
That Moses might report to them his will,
And terror cease; he grants what they besought,
Instructed that to God is no access
Without mediator, whose high office now
Moses in figure bears, to introduce
One greater, of whose day he shall foretel,
And all the prophets in their age the times
Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus laws and rites
Establish'd, such delight hath God in men
Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes
Among them to set up his tabernacle,
The holy One with mortal men to dwell;
By his prescript a sanctuary is fram'd
Of cedar, overlaid with gold, therein
An ark, and in the ark his testimony,
The records of his covenant; over these
A mercy seat of Gold between the wings
Of two bright cherubim; before him burn
Sev'n lamps as in a zodiac representing
The heav'nly fires; over the tent a cloud
Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night,
Save when they journey, and at length they come,
Conducted by his angel to the land

Promis'd to Abraham and his seed : the rest
Were long to tell, how many battles fought,
How many kings destroy'd and kingdoms won,
Or how the sun shall in mid heav'n stand still
A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
Man's voice commanding, Sun in Gibeon stand,
And thou moon in the vale of Ajalon,
Till Israel overcome ; so call the third
From Abraham, son of Isaac, and from him
His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.

Here Adam interpos'd : O sent from heav'n,
Enlight'ner of my darkness, gracious things
Thou hast reveal'd, those chiefly which concern
Just Abraham and his seed : now first I find
Mine eyes true opening, and my heart much eas'd,
Erewhile perplex'd with thoughts what would become
Of me and all mankind ; but now I see
His day, In whom all nations shall be blest,
Favour unmerited by me, who sought
Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.
This yet I apprehend not, why to those
Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth,
So many and so various laws are given ;
So many laws argues so many sins
Among them ; how can God with such reside ?

To whom thus Michael : Doubt not but that sin
Will reign among them, as of thee begot ;
And therefore was law given them to evince
Their natural pravity, by stirring up
Sin against law to fight : that when they see
Law can discover sin, but now remove,
Save by those shadowy expiations weak,
The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
Some blood more precious must be paid for man,
Just for unjust, that in such righteousness
To them by faith imputed, they may find
Justification towards God, and peace
Of conscience, which the law by ceremonies
Cannot appease, nor man the mortal part

Perform, and not performing cannot live.
So law appears imperfect, and but given
With purpose to resign them in full time
Up to a better covenant, disciplin'd
From shadowy types to truth, from flesh to spirit,
From imposition of strict laws to free
Acceptance of large grace, from servile fear
To filial, works of law to works of faith.
And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
Highly belov'd, being but the minister
Of law, his people into Canaan lead ;
But Joshua whom the gentiles Jesus call,
His name and office bearing, who shall quell
The adversary serpent, and bring back
Through the world's wilderness long wandered man
Safe to eternal paradise of rest.
Meanwhile they in their earthly Canaan plac'd
Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins
National interrupt their public peace,
Provoking God to raise them enemies ;
From whom as oft he saves them penitent
By judges first, then under kings ; of whom
The second, both for piety renown'd
And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive
Irrevocable, that his regal throne
For ever shall endure ; the like shall sing
All prophecy, that of the royal stock
Of David (so I name this king,) shall rise
A son, the woman's seed to thee foretold,
Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust
All nations, and to kings foretold, of kings
The last, for of his reign shall be no end.
But first a long succession must ensue,
And his next son, for wealth and wisdom fam'd
The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
Wand'ring, shall in a glorious temple enshrine.
Such follow him, as shall be register'd
Part good, part bad, of bad the longer scroll,
Whose foul idolatries, and other faults

Heap'd to the popular sum, will so incense
God, as to leave them, and expose their land,
Their city, his temple, and his holy ark
With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
To that proud city, whose high walls thou saw'st
Left in confusion, Babylon thence call'd.
There in captivity he lets them dwell
The space of sev'nty years, then brings them back,
Rememb'ring mercy, and his covenant sworn
To David, stablish'd as the days of heav'n.
Return'd from Babylon by leave of kings
Their lords, whom God dispos'd, the house of God
They first re-edify, and for awhile
In mean estate live moderate, till grown
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow :
But first among the priests dissension springs,
Men who attend the altar, and should most
Endeavour peace : their strife pollution brings
Upon the temple itself ; at last they seize
The sceptre, and regard not David's sons,
Then lose it to a stranger, that the true
Anointed king Messiah might be born
Barr'd of his right ; yet at his birth a star
Unseen before in heav'n proclaims him come.
And guides the eastern sages, who inquire
His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold ;
His place of birth a solemn angel tells
To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night ;
They gladly thither haste, and by a choir
Of squadron'd angels hear his carol sung.
A virgin is his mother, but his sire
The pow'r of the most High ; he shall ascend
The throne hereditary, and bound his reign
With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the heav'ns.
He ceas'd, discerning Adam with such joy
Surcharg'd, as had like grief been dew'd in tears,
Without the vent of words, which these he breath'd :
O prophet of glad tidings, finisher
Of utmost hope ! now clear I understand

What oft my steadiest tho'ts have search'd in vain ;
Why our great expectation should be call'd
The seed of woman : virgin mother, hail,
High in the love of heav'n, yet from my loins
Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son
Of God most High ; so God with man unites.
Needs must the serpent now his capital bruise
Expect with mortal pain : say where and when
Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel.

To whom thus Michael : Dream not of their fight,
As of a duel, or the local wounds
Of head or heel ; not therefore joins the Son
Manhood to godhead, with more strength to foil
Thy enemy : nor so is overcome
Satan, whose fall from heav'n, a deadlier bruise,
Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound ;
Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall re-cure,
Not by destroying Satan, but his works
In thee and in thy seed ; nor can this be,
But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,
Obedience to the law of God, impos'd
On penalty of death, and suffering death,
The penalty of thy transgression due,
And due to theirs, which out of thine will grow :
So only can high justice rest appaid.
The law of God exact he shall fulfil
Both by obedience and by love, though love
Alone fulfil the law : thy punishment
He shall endure by coming in the flesh
To a reproachful life and cursed death,
Proclaiming life to all who shall believe
In his redemption, and that his obedience
Imputed becomes theirs by faith, his merits
To save them not their own, though legal works.
For this he shall live hated, be blasphem'd,
Seiz'd on by force, judg'd, and to death condemn'd
A shameful and accurs'd, nail'd to the cross
By his own nation, slain for bringing life ;
But to the cross he nails thy enemies,

The law that is against thee, and the sins
Of all mankind, with him there crucify'd,
Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
In this his satisfaction : so he dies,
But soon revives ; death over him no power
Shall long usurp ; ere the third dawning light
Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,
Thy ransom paid, which man from death redeems,
His death for man, as many as offer'd life
Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
By faith not void of works : this godlike act
Annuls thy doom, the death thou should'st have dy'd,
In sin for ever lost from life ; this act
Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength,
Defeating sin and death his two main arms,
And fix far deeper in his head their stings
Than temp'ral death, shall bruise the victor's heel,
Or theirs whom he redeems, a death like sleep,
A gentle wafting to immortal life.
Nor after resurrection shall he stay,
Longer on earth than certain times t' appear
To his disciples, men who in his life
Still follow'd him ; to them shall leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him they learn'd,
And his salvation, them who shall believe
Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
Pure, and in mind prepar'd, if so befall,
For death like that which the Redeemer dy'd.
All nations they shall teach ; for from that day
Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
Salvation shall be preach'd, but to the sons
Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world ;
So in his seed all nations shall be blest.
Then to the heav'n of heav'ns he shall ascend
With victory, triumphing through the air
Over his foes and thine ; there shall surprise
The serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains

Through all his realm, and there confounded leave ;
Then enter into glory, and resume
His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
Above all names in heav'n ; and thence shall come,
When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,
With glory and pow'r to judge both quick and dead,
To judge th' unfaithful dead, but to reward
His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
Whether in heav'n or earth, for then the earth
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
Than this of Eden, and far happier days.

So spake th' archangel Michael, then paus'd,
As at the world's great period ; and our sire
Replete with joy and wonder thus reply'd :

O goodness infinite, goodness immense !
That all this good of evil shall produce,
And evil turn to good ; more wonderful
Than that which by creation first brought forth
Light out of darkness ! full of doubt I stand,
Whether I should repent me now of sin
By me done and occasion'd, or rejoice
Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring,
To God more glory, more good will to men
From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.
But say, if our Deliverer up to heav'n
Must reascend, what will betide the few
His faithful, left among th' unfaithful herd,
The enemies of truth ? who then shall guide
His people, who defend ? will they not deal
Worse with his followers than with him they dealt ?

Be sure they will, said th' angel : but from heav'n
He to his own a Comforter will send,
The promise of the Father, who shall dwell
His Spirit within them, and the law of faith
Working through love, upon their hearts shall write
To guide them in all truth, and also arm
With spiritual armour, able to resist
Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts,
What man can do against them, not afraid,

Though to the death, against such cruelties
With inward consolations recompens'd,
And oft supported so as shall amaze
Their proudest persecuters: for the Spirit
Pour'd first on his apostles, whom he sends
To evangelize the nations, then on all
Baptiz'd, shall them with wondrous gifts endue
To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,
As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
Great numbers of each nation to receive
With joy the tidings brought from heav'n; at length
Their ministry perform'd, and race well run,
Their doctrine and their story written left,
They die; but in their room as they forewarn,
Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,
Who all the sacred mysteries of heav'n
To their own vile advantages shall turn,
Of lucre and ambition, and the truth
With superstitions and traditions taint,
Left only in those written records pure,
Though not but by the Spirit understood.
Then shall they seek t' avail themselves of names,
Places, and titles, and with these to join
Secular pow'r, though feigning still to act
By spiritual, to themselves appropriating
The spirit of God, promis'd alike, and giv'n
To all believers; and from that pretence,
Spiritual laws by carnal pow'r shall force
On every conscience; laws which none shall find
Left them enroll'd, or what the Spirit within
Shall on the heart engrave. What will they ther
But force the Spirit of grace itself, and bind
His consort liberty? what, but unbuild
His living temples, built by faith to stand,
Their own faith not another's? for on earth
Who against faith and conscience can be heard?
Infallible, yet many will presume:
Whence heavy persecution shall arise
On all who in the worship persevere

Of spirit and truth ; the rest, far greater part,
Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
Religion satisfy'd : truth shall retire
Bestuck with sland'rous darts, and works of faith
Rarely be found : so shall the world go on,
To good malignant, to bad men benign,
Under her own weight groaning, till the day
Appear of respiration to the just,
And vengeance to the wicked, at return
Of him so lately promis'd to thy aid,
To woman's Seed obscurely then foretold,
Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord,
Last in the clouds from heav'n to be reveal'd
In glory of the Father, to dissolve
Satan with his perverted world, then raise
From the conflagrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,
New heav'ns, new earth ages of endless date
Founded in righteousness and peace and love,
To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss.

He ended ; and thus Adam last reply'd :
How soon hath thy prediction, seer blest,
Measur'd this transient world, the race of time,
Till time stand fix'd ? beyond is all abyss,
Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
Greatly instructed I shall hence depart
Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain ;
Beyond which was my folly to aspire.
Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
And love with fear the only God, to walk
As in his presence, ever to observe
His providence, and on him sole depend,
Merciful over all his works, with good
Still overcoming evil, and by small
Accomplishing great things, by things deem'd weak
Subverting wordly strong, and wordly wise
By simply meek : that suffering for truth's sake
Is fortitude to highest victory,
And, to the faithful, death the gate of life ;

Taught this by his example whom I now
Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.

To whom thus also th' angel last reply'd :
This having learn'd, thou hast attain'd the sum
Of wisdom ; hope no higher, though all the stars
Thou knew'st by name, and all th' ethereal pow'rs,
All secrets of the deep, all Nature's works,
Or works of God in heav'n, air, earth or sea,
And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst,
And all the rule, one empire ; only add
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable, add faith,
Add virtue, patience, temperance, add love,
By name to come call'd charity, the soul
Of all the rest : then wilt thou not be loath
To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
A paradise within thee, happier far.
Let us descend now therefore from this top
Of speculation ; for the hour precise
Exacts our parting hence ; and see ! the guards,
By me encamp'd in yonder hill, expect
Their motion, at whose front a flaming sword,
In signal of remove, waves fiercely round ;
We may no longer stay : go waken Eve ;
Her also I with gentle dreams have calm'd
Portending good, and all her spirits compos'd
To meek submission : thou at season fit
Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard,
Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,
The great deliverance by her seed to come,
(For by the woman's seed) on all mankind :
That ye may live, which will be many days,
Both in one faith unanimous though sad,
With cause for evils past, yet much more cheer'd
With meditation on the happy end.

He ended, and they both descend the hill ;
Descended, Adam to the bow'r where Eve
Lay sleeping ran before, but found her wak'd ;
And thus with words not sad she him receiv'd :

Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st I know,

For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise,
Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress
Wearied I fell asleep ; but now lead on ;
In me is no delay ; with thee to go,
Is to stay here ; without thee here to stay,
Is to go hence unwilling ; thou to me
Art all things under heav'n, all places thou,
Who for my wilful crime art banish'd hence.
This further consolation yet secure
I carry hence ; though all by me is lost,
Such favour I unworthy am vouchsaf'd,
By me the promis'd Seed shall all restore.

So spake our mother Eve, and Adam heard
Well pleas'd, but answer'd not ; for now too nigh
Th' arch-angel stood, and from the other hill
To their fix'd station, all in bright array
The cherubim descended ; on the ground
Gliding metorous, as evening mist
Ris'n from a river o'er the marish glides,
And gathers ground fast at the lab'rer's heel
Homeward returning. High in front advanc'd,
The brandish'd sword of God before them blaz'd,
Fierce as a comet ; which with torrid heat,
And vapour as the Lybian air adust,
Began to parch that temp'rate clime ; whereat
In either hand the hast'ning angel caught
Our ling'ring parents, and to th' eastern gate
Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
To the subjected plain ; then disappear'd.
They looking back, all th' eastern side beheld
Of paradise, so late their happy seat,
Wav'd over by that flaming brand, the gate
With dreadful faces throng'd and fiery arms :
Some natural tears they dropt, but wip'd them soon ;
The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide :
They hand in hand, with wand'ring steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way.











CONTENTS.

PARADISE REGAINED.

	Page.
Book I, ...	5
Book II, ...	19
Book III, ...	33
Book IV, ...	45
Mask of Comus, ...	63
Samson Agonistes, ...	95

POEMS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

L'Allegro, ...	145
Il Penseroso, ...	149
On the death of a fair infant dying of a cough, ...	154
At a vacation exercise in the College, ...	157
On the morning of Christ's Nativity, ...	160
The Passion, ...	168
On Time, ...	171
Upon the Circumcision, ...	171
At a solemn Music, ...	172
An epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester, ...	173
Song.—On May Morning, ...	175
On Shakspeare, ...	176
On the University Carrier, ...	176
Another on the same, ...	177
Arcades, ...	178
Lycidas, ...	182
On the new forcers of conscience, under the Long Parliament, ...	188
The fifth Ode of Horace, Lib. I.	189

SONNETS.

To the Nightingale, ...	191
On his being arrived at the age of twenty-three, ...	191
When the assault was intended to the City, ...	192
To a virtuous Young Lady, ...	192
To the Lady Margaret Ley, ...	193
On the detraction which followed upon the writ- ting certain treatises, ...	194
On the same, ...	195
To Mr. H. Lawes, on his airs, ...	195
On the religious memory of Mrs. Catharine Thomson, ...	196
To the Lord General Fairfax, ...	196
To the Lord General Cromwell, ...	197
To Sir Henry Vane the younger, ...	198
On the late massacre in Piedmont, ...	198
On his blindness, ...	199
To Mr. Lawrence, ...	200
To Cyriac Skinner, ...	200
To the same, ...	201
On his deceased Wife, ...	201
Psalms, ...	203

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK I.

I WHO erewhile the happy garden sung,
By one man's disobedience lost, now sing
Recover'd Paradise to all mankind,
By one man's firm obedience fully tried
Through all temptation, and the Tempter foil'd
In all his wiles, defeated and repuls'd,
And Eden rais'd in the waste wilderness.

Thou spirit who ledst this glorious Eremite
Into the desert, his victorious field,
Against the spiritual foe, and brought him thence
By proof th' undoubted Son of God, inspire,
As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute,
And bear through height or depth of Nature's bound*
With prosp'rous wing full summ'd, to tell of deeds
Above heroic, though in secret done,
And unrecorded left through many an age,
Worthy t' have not remain'd so long unsung!

Now had the great Proclaimer, with a voice
More awful than the sound of trumpet, cried
Repentance, and heav'n's kingdom nigh at hand
To all baptiz'd: to this great baptism flock'd
With awe the regions round, and with them came
From Nazareth the son of Joseph deem'd,
To the flood Jordan, came as then obscure,
Unmark'd, unknown; but him the Baptist soon

Descried, divinely warn'd, and witness bore
As to his worthier, and would have resign'd
To him his heavenly office ; nor was long
His witness unconfirm'd : on him baptiz'd
Heaven open'd, and in likeness of a dove
The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice
From heaven pronounc'd him his beloved Son.
That heard the adversary, who roving still
About the world, at that assembly fam'd
Would not be last, and with the voice divine
Nigh thunder-struck, th' exalted Man, to whom
Such high attest was given, awhile survey'd
With wonder ; then, with envy fraught and rage,
Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid-air
To council summons all his mighty peers,
Within thick clouds and dark ten-fold involv'd,
A gloomy consistory ; and them amidst
With looks aghast and sad he thus bespake :

O ancient powers of air and this wide world,
For much more willingly I mention air,
'This our old conquest, than remember hell,
Our hated habitation ; well ye know
How many ages, as the years of men,
This universe we have possess'd, and rul'd
In manner at our will th' affairs of earth,
Since Adam and his facile consort Eve
Lost Paradise, deceiv'd by me, though since
With dread attending when that fatal wound
Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve
Upon my head : long the decrees of heaven
Delay, for longest time to him is short :
And now too soon for us the circling hours
'This dreaded time have compass'd, wherein we
Must bide the stroke of that long threaten'd wound,
At least if so we can, and by the head
Broken be not intended all our power
To be infring'd, our freedom and our being
In this fair empire won of earth and air ;
For this ill news I bring, the woman's Seed

Destin'd to this, is late of woman born :
His birth to our just fear gave no small cause,
But his growth now to youth's full flower, displaying
All virtue, grace, and wisdom, to achieve
Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.
Before him a great prophet, to proclaim
His coming, is sent harbinger, who all
Invites, and in the consecrated stream
Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them so
Purified, to receive him pure ; or rather
To do him honour as their king : all come,
And he himself among them was baptiz'd ;
Not thence to be more pure, but to receive
The testimony of heaven, that who he is
Thenceforth the nations may not doubt. I saw
The prophet do him reverence, on him rising
Out of the water, heaven above the clouds
Unfold her chrystal doors, thence on his head
A perfect dove descend, whate'er it meant,
And out of heaven the Sov'reign voice I heard,
This is my Son belov'd, in him am pleas'd.
His mother then is mortal, but his sire
He who obtains the monarchy of heaven,
And what will he not do t' advance his Son ?
His first-begot we know and sore have felt,
When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep ;
Who this is we must learn, for man he seems
In all his lineaments, though in his face
The glimpses of his Father's glory shine.
Ye see our danger on the utmost edge
Of hazard, which admits no long debate,
But must with something sudden be oppos'd,
Not force, but well couch'd fraud, well woven snares
Ere in the head of nations he appear
Their king, their leader, and supreme on earth.
I, when no other durst, sole undertook
The dismal expedition to find out
And ruin Adam, and th' exploit perform'd
Successfully ; a calmer voyage new

Will waft me: and the way found prosp'rous once
Induces best to hope of like success.

He ended, and his words impression left
Of much amazement to the infernal crew,
Distracted and surpris'd with deep dismay
At these sad tidings; but no time was then
For long indulgence to their fears or grief:
Unanimous they all commit the care
And management of this main enterprise
To him their great dictator, whose attempt
At first against mankind so well had thriv'd
In Adam's overthrow, and led their march
From hell's deep-vaulted den to dwell in light,
Regents and potentates, and kings, yea gods
Of many a pleasant realm and province wide.
So to the coast of Jordan he directs
His easy steps, girded with snaky wiles,
Where he might likeliest find this new declar'd,
This Man of men, attested Son of God,
Temptation, and all guile, on him to try;
So to subvert whom he suspected rais'd
To end his reign on earth, so long enjoy'd;
But contrary, unweeting he fulfill'd
The purpos'd counsel, pre-ordain'd and fix'd
Of the Most high, who in full frequency bright
Of angels, thus to Gabriel, smiling, spake:

Gabriel this day by proof thou shalt behold,
Thou and all angels conversant on earth
With man or men's affairs, how I begin
To verify that solemn message late,
On which I sent thee to the Virgin pure
In Galilee, that she should bear a Son
Great in renown, and call'd the Son of God;
Then told'st her doubting how these things could be
To her a virgin, that on her should come
The Holy Ghost, and the power of the Highest
O'er-shadow her; this Man born, and now upgrown
To show him worthy of his birth divine
And high prediction, henceforth I expose

To Satan ; let him tempt and now assay
His utmost subtilty, because he boasts
And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng
Of his apostacy ; he might have learnt
Less overweening since he fail'd in Job,
Whose constant perseverance overcame
What'er his cruel malice could invent.
He now shall know I can produce a Man
Of female seed, far abler to resist
All his solicitations, and at length
All his vast force, and drive him back to hell,
Winning by conquest what the first man lost,
By fallacy surpris'd. But first I mean
To exercise him in the wilderness ;
There shall he first lay down the rudiments
Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth
To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foes
By humiliation and strong sufferance ;
His weakness shall o'ercome Satanic strength,
And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh ;
That all the angels and ethereal powers,
They now, and men hereafter, may discern
From what consummate virtue I have chose
This perfect Man, by merit call'd my Son,
To earn salvation for the sons of men.

So spake th' eternal Father, and all heaven
Admiring stood a space, then into hymns
Burst forth, and in celestial measures mov'd,
Circling the throne and singing, while the hand
Sung with the voice, and this the argument :

Vict'ry and triumph to the Son of God,
Now ent'ring his great duel, not of arms,
But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles.
The Father knows the Son ; therefore secure
Ventures his filial virtue, though untried,
Against whate'er may tempt, whate'er seduce,
Allure, or terrify, or undermine.
Be frustrate all ye stratagems of hell,
And devilish machinations come to nought.

So they in heaven their odes and vigils tun'd;
Meanwhile the Son of God, who yet some days
Lodg'd in Bethabara, where John baptiz'd,
Musing and much revolving in his breast,
How best the mighty work he might begin
Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
Publish his godlike office now mature,
One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading,
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse
With Solitude, till far from track of men,
Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
He enter'd now the bord'ring desert wild,
And with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,
His holy meditations thus pursu'd :

O what a multitude of thoughts at once
Awaken'd in me swarm, while I consider
What from within I feel myself, and hear
What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compar'd !
When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing : all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
What might be public good : myself I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
All righteous things : therefore above my years,
The law of God I read, and found it sweet,
Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
To such perfection, that ere yet my age
Hæd measur'd twice six years, at our great feast
I went into the temple, there to hear
The teachers of our law, and to propose
What might improve my knowledge, or their own ;
And was admir'd by all : yet this not all
To which my spirit aspir'd : victorious deeds
Flam'd in my heart, heroic acts, one while
To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke,
Then to subdue and quell o'er all the earth
Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,
Till truth were freed, and equity restor'd :

Yet held it more humane, more heavenly, first,
By winning words, to conquer willing hearts,
And make Persuasion do the work of Fear;
At least to try, and teach the erring soul
Not wilfully mis-doing, but unaware
Misled; the stubborn only to subdue.
These growing thoughts, my mother soon perceiving
By words at times cast forth, inly rejoic'd,
And said to me apart,—‘ High are thy thoughts,
O Son, but nourish them, and let them soar
To what height sacred virtue and true worth
Can raise them, though above example high;
By matchless deeds express thy matchless Sire.
For know, thou art no son of mortal man;
Though men esteem thee low of parentage,
Thy Father is th’ eternal King, who rules
All heaven and earth, angels and sons of men.
A messenger from God foretold thy birth
Conceiv’d in me a virgin; he foretold
Thou shouldst be great, and sit on David’s throne,
And of thy kingdom there should be no end.
At thy nativity a glorious choir
Of angels in the fields of Bethlehem sung
To shepherds, watching at their folds by night,
And told them the Messiah now was born,
Where they might see him, and to thee they came,
Directed to the manger where thou lay’st,
For in the inn was left no better room;
A star, not seen before, in heaven appearing,
Guided the wise men thither from the east,
To honour thee with incense, myrrh, and gold,
By whose bright course led on they found the place,
Affirming it thy star new graven in heaven,
By which they knew the King of Israel born.
Just Simeon and prophetic Anna, warn’d
By vision, found thee in the temple, and spake
Before the altar and the vested priest,
Like things of thee to all that present stood.’—
This having heard, straight I again revolv’d

The law and prophets, searching what was writ
Concerning the Messiah, to our scribes
Known partly, and soon found of whom they spake
I am ; this chiefly, that my way must lie
Through many a hard essay, ev'n to the death,
Ere I the promis'd kingdom can attain,
Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins
Full weight must be transferr'd upon my head.
Yet neither thus dishearten'd or dismay'd,
The time prefix'd I waited, when behold
The Baptist (of whose birth I oft have heard,
Not knew by sight) now come, who was to come
Before Messiah, and his way prepare.
I, as all others to his baptism came,
Which I believ'd was from above : but he
Straight knew me, and with loudest voice proclaim'd
Me him, (for it was shown him so from heaven,)
Me him, whose harbinger he was ; and first
Refus'd on me his baptism to confer,
As much his greater, and was hardly won :
But as I rose out of the laving stream,
Heaven open'd her eternal doors, from whence
The Spirit descended on me like a dove.
And last, the sum of all, my Father's voice
Audibly heard from heaven, pronounc'd me his,
Me his beloved Son, in whom alone
He was well pleas'd ; by which I knew the time
Now full, that I no more should live obscure,
But openly begin, as best becomes
Th' authority which I deriv'd from heaven.
And now by some strong motion I am led
Into this wildernss ; to what intent
I learn not yet, perhaps I need not know ;
For what concerns my knowledge God reveals.
So spoke our Morning Star, then in his rise,
And, looking round on every side, beheld
A pathless desert dusk with horrid shades :
The way he came not having mark'd, return
Was difficult, by human steps untrod ;

And he still on was led, but with such thoughts
Accompanied of things past and to come
Lodg'd in his breast, as well might recommend
Such solitude before choicest society.
Full forty days he pass'd, whether on hill
Sometimes, anon in shady vale, each night
Under the covert of some ancient oak,
Or cedar, to defend him from the dew,
Or harbour'd in lone cave, is not reveal'd ;
Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt
Till those days ended, hunger'd then at last
Among wild beasts ; they at his sight grew mild,
Nor sleeping him nor waking harm'd ; his walk
The fiery serpent fled, and noxious worm,
The lion and fierce tiger glar'd aloof.
But now an aged man, in rural weeds,
Following, as seem'd the quest of some stray ewe,
Or wither'd sticks to gather, which might serve
Against a winter's day, when winds blow keen,
To warm him, wet return'd from field at eve,
He saw approach, who first with curious eye
Perus'd him, then with words thus utter'd spoke :

Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place
So far from path or road of men, who pass
In troop or caravan ? for single none
Durst ever, who return'd, and dropp'd not here
His carcass, pin'd with hunger and with drought.
I ask thee rather, and the more admire,
For that to me thou seem'st the Man whom late
Our new baptising Prophet at the ford
Of Jordan honour'd so, and call'd thee Son
Of God, I saw and heard ; for we sometimes,
Who dwell this wild ; constrain'd by want come forth
To town or village nigh, (nighest is far,)
Where ought we hear, and curious are to hear,
What happens new : Fame also finds us out."
To whom the Son of God : Who brought me hither,
Will bring me hence ; no other guide I seek.

By miracle he may, replied the swain ;

What other way I see not ; for we here
Live on tough roots and stubs, to thirst inur'd
More than the camel, and to drink go far,
Men to much misery and hardship born ;
But if thou be the Son of God, command
That out of these hard stones be made thee bread,
So shalt thou save thyself, and us relieve
With food, whereof we wretched seldom taste.

He ended, and the Son of God replied :
Think'st thou such force in bread ? Is it not written
(For I discern thee other than thou seem'st)
Man lives not by bread only, but each word
Proceeding from the mouth of God, who fed
Our fathers here with manna ? In the mount
Moses was forty days, nor eat nor drank ;
And forty days Elijah without food
Wander'd this barren waste ; the same I now :
Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust,
Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art ?

Whom thus answer'd th' archfiend, now undis-
guis'd :

'Tis true I am that spirit unfortunate,
Who, leagu'd with millions more in rash revolt,
Kept not my happy station, but was driven
With them from bliss to the bottomless deep ;
Yet to that hideous place not so confin'd
By rigour unconniving, but that oft
Leaving my dolorous prison, I enjoy
Large liberty to round this globe of earth,
Or range in th' air ; nor from the heaven of heavens
Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.
I came among the Sons of God when he
Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job,
To prove him and illustrate his high worth ;
And when to all his angels he propos'd
To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud,
That he might fall in Ramoth, they demurring,
I undertook that office, and the tongues
Of all his flattering prophets glibb'd with lies,

To his destruction, as I had in charge ;
For what he bids I do ; though I have lost
Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
To be belov'd of God, I have not lost
To love, at least contemplate and admire
What I see excellent in good, or fair,
Or virtuous ; I should so have lost all sense.
What can be then less in me than desire
To see thee and approach thee, whom I know
Declar'd the Son of God, to hear attest
Thy wisdom, and behold thy godlike deeds ?
Men generally think me much a foe
To all mankind ; why should I ? They to me
Never did wrong or violence : by them
I lost not what I lost ; rather by them
I gain'd what I have gain'd, and with them dwell
Copartner in these regions of the world,
If not disposer ; lend them oft my aid,
Oft my advice, by presages and signs,
And answers, oracles, portents and dreams,
Whereby they may direct their future life.
Envy they say excites me thus to gain
Companions of my misery and wo.
At first it may be ; but long since with wo
Nearer acquainted, now I feel, by proof,
That fellowship in pain divides not smart,
Nor lightens aught each man's peculiar load.
Small consolation then, were man adjoin'd :
This wounds me most, (what can it less ?) that man.
Man fallen shall be restor'd, I never more.

To whom our Saviour sternly thus replied :
Deservedly thou griev'st, compos'd of lies
From the beginning, and in lies wilt end ;
Who boasts release from hell, and leave to come
Into the heaven of heavens : thou com'st indeed
As a poor miserable captive-thrall
Comes to the place where he before had sat
Among the prime in splendour, now depos'd,
Ejected, emptied, gaz'd unpitied, shunn'd,

A spectacle of ruin or of scorn
To all the host of heaven ; the happy place
Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy,
Rather inflames thy torment representing
Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable,
So never more in hell than when in heaven.
But thou art serviceable to heaven's King.
Wilt thou impute t' obedience what thy fear
Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites ?
What but thy malice mov'd thee to misdeem
Of righteous Job, then cruelly to afflict him
With all inflictions ? but his patience won.
The other service was thy chosen task
To be a liar in four hundred mouths ;
For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.
Yet thou pretend'st to truth ; all oracles
By thee are given, and what confess'd more true
Among the nations ? that hath been thy craft,
By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.
But what have been thy answers, what but dark,
Ambiguous, and with double sense deluding ;
Which they who ask'd have seldom understood,
And not well understood as good not known ?
Whoever by consulting at thy shrine
Return'd the wiser, or the more instruct
To fly or follow what concern'd him most,
And run not sooner to his fatal snare ?
For God hath justly given the nations up
To thy delusions ; justly, since they fell
Idolatrous : but when his purpose is
Among them to declare his providence
To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth
But from him, or his angels president
In every province ? who themselves disdaining
T' approach thy temples, give thee in command
What to the smallest tittle thou shalt say
To thy adorers ; thou, with trembling tear,
Or, like a fawning parasite obey'st .
Then to thyself ascrib'st the truth foretold.

But this thy glory shall be soon retrench'd ;
No more shalt thou by oracle abuse
The Gentiles ; henceforth oracles are ceas'd,
And thou no more with pomp and sacrifice
Shalt be inquir'd at Delphos or else where ;
At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.
God hath now sent his Living Oracle
Into the world to teach his final will,
And sends his Spirit of Truth henceforth to dwell
In pious hearts, an inward oracle
To all truth requisite for men to know.

So spake our Saviour ; but the subtle fiend,
Though inly stung with anger and disdain,
Dissembled, and this answer smooth returned :
Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,
And urg'd me hard with doings, which not will,
But misery, hath wrested from me ; where
Easily canst thou find one miserable,
And not enforc'd oft-times to part from truth ;
If it may stand him more in stead to lie,
Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure ?
But thou art plac'd above me, thou art Lord ;
From thee I can and must submiss endure
Check or reproof, and glad to scape so quit.
Hard are the ways of Truth, and rough to walk :
Smooth on the tongue discours'd, pleasing to th' ear
And tunable as sylvan pipe or song ;
What wonder then if I delight to hear
Her dictates from thy mouth ? Most men admire
Virtue, who follow not her lore : permit me
To hear thee when I come (since no man comes)
And talk at least, though I despair t' attain.
Thy Father, who is holy, wise, and pure,
Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest
To tread his sacred courts, and minister
About his altar, handling holy things,
Praying, or vowing, and vouchsaf'd his voice
To Baalam reprobate, a prophet yet
Inspir'd : disdain not such access to me

To whom our Saviour with unalter'd brow :
Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope
I bid not or forbid ; do as thou find'st
Permission from above ; thou canst not more.

He added not ; and Satan, bowing low
His grey dissimulation, disappeared
Into thin air diffus'd : for now began
Night with her sullen wings to-double shade
The desert ; fowls in their clay nests were couched
And now wild beasts came forth the woods to
 roam.

END OF BOOK FIRST.

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK II.

MEANWHILE the new baptiz'd, who yet remain'd
At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen
Him whom they heard so late expressly call'd
Jesus, Messiah, Son of God declar'd ;
And on that high authority had believed,
And with him talk'd, and with him lodg'd, (I mean
Andrew and Simon, famous after known,
With others, though in holy writ not nam'd,)
Now missing him, their joy so lately found,
So lately found, and so abruptly gone,
Began to doubt, and doubted many days,
And as the days increas'd, increas'd their doubt :
Sometimes they thought he might be only shown
And for a time caught up to God, as once
Moses was in the mount, and missing long ;
And the great Thisbite, who on fiery wheels
Rode up to heaven, yet once again to come.
Therefore as those young prophets then with care
Sought lost Elijah, so in each place these
Nigh to Bethabara ; in Jericho,
The city of Palms, Ænon and Salem old,
Machærus, and each town or city wall'd
On this side the broad lake Genezaret,
Or in Perea ; but returned in vain.
Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek,

Where winds with reeds and osiers whisp'ring play,
Plain fishermen, no greater men them call,
Close in a cottage low together got,
Their unexpected loss and complaints outbreath'd :

Alas from what high hope to what relapse
Unlook'd for are we fallen ? our eyes beheld
Messiah certainly now come, so long
Expected of our fathers ; we have heard
His words, his wisdom, full of grace and truth ;
Now, now, for sure deliverance is at hand,
The kingdom shall to Israel be restored :
Thus we rejoic'd, but soon our joy is turn'd
Into perplexity and new amaze :
For whither is he gone, what accident
Hath rapt him from us ? will he now retire
After appearance, and again prolong
Our expectation ? God of Israel,
Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come ;
Behold the kings of th' earth how they oppress
Thy chosen, to what heights their power unjust
They have exalted, and behind them cast
All fear of thee : arise and vindicate
Thy glory, free thy people from their yoke.
But let us wait ; thus far he hath performed,
Sent his anointed, and to us revealed him,
By his great Prophet, pointed at and shown
In public, and with him we have convers'd ;
Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
Lay on his providence ; he will not fail,
Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recal,
Mock us with his bless'd sight, then snatch him
hence ;

Soon we shall see our hope, our joy, return.

Thus they out of their complaints new hope resume
To find whom at the first they found unsought :
But to his mother Mary, when she saw
Others return'd from baptism not her son,
Nor left at Jordan, tidings of him none,
Within her breast tho' calm, her breast tho' pure,

Motherly cares and fears got head, and rais'd
Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus
 clad :

O what avails me now that honour high
To have conceiv'd of God, or that salute,
Hail highly favour'd among women bless'd !
While I to sorrows am no less advanc'd,
And fears as eminent, above the lot
Of other women, by the birth I bore
In such a season born, when scarce a shed
Could be obtain'd to shelter him or me
From the bleak air ; a stable was our warmth,
A manger his ; yet soon enforc'd to fly
Thence into Egypt, till the murd'rous king
Were dead, who sought his life, and missing fill'd
With infant blood the streets of Bethlehem :
From Egypt home return'd ; in Nazareth
Hath been our dwelling many years ; his life
Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
Little suspicious to any king ; but now
Full grown to man acknowledg'd as I hear,
By John the Baptist, and in public shown,
Son own'd from heaven by his Father's voice ;
I look'd for some great change : to honour ? no,
But trouble ; as old Simeon plain foretold,
That to the fall and rising he should be
Of many in Israel and to a sign
Spoken against, that through my very soul
A sword shall pierce. This is my favour'd lot,
My exaltation to afflictions high :
Afflicted I may be, it seems, and bless'd :
I will not argue that, nor will repine :
But where delays he now ? some great intent
Conceals him. When twelve years he scarce had seen,
I lost him, but so found, as well I saw
He could not lose himself ; but went about
His Father's business ; what he meant I mus'd,
Since understand ; much more his absence now,
Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.

But I to wait with patience am inur'd :
My heart hath been a store-house long of things
And sayings laid up, portending strange events.

Thus Mary, pondering oft, and oft to mind
Recalling what remarkably had pass'd
Since first her salutation heard, with thoughts
Meekly compos'd awaited the fulfilling :
'The while her Son tracing the desert wild ;
Sole, but with holiest meditations fed,
Into himself descended, and at once
All his great work to come before him set ;
How to begin, how to accomplish best
His end of being on earth, and mission high :
For Satan with sly preface to return
Had left him vacant and with speed was gone
Up to the middle region of thick air,
Where all his potentates in council sat ;
There without sign of boast, or sign of joy,
Solicitous and blank, he thus began :

Princes, heaven's ancient sons, ethereal thrones
Demonian spirits now, from th' element
Each of his reign allotted, rightlier call'd
Pow'rs of fire, air, water, and earth beneath,
So may we hold our place and these mild seats
Without new trouble ; such an enemy
Is risen to invade us, who no less
'Threatens than our expulsion down to hell ;
I, as I undertook, and with the vote
Consenting in full frequency was impower'd,
Have found him, view'd him, tasted him, but find
Far other labour to be undergone
Than when I dealt with Adam, first of men,
Though Adam by his wife's allurements fell,
However to this man inferior far,
If he be man by mother's side at least,
With more than human gifts from heaven adorn'd,
Perfections absolute, graces divine
And amplitude of mind to greatest deeds :
Therefore I am returned, lest confidence

Of my success with Eve in Paradise
Deceive ye to persuasion over-sure
Of like succeeding here ; I summon all
Rather to be in readiness, with hand
Or counsel to assist ; lest I, who erst
Thought none my equal, now be over-match'd.

So spake th' old Serpent doubting, and from all
With clamour was assur'd their utmost aid
At his command ; when from amidst them rose
Belial, the dissolutest spirit that fell,
The sensuallest, and after Asmodai
The fleshliest incubus, and thus advis'd :

Set women in his eye and in his walk
Among daughters of men the fairest found ;
Many are in each region passing fair
As the noon sky ; more like to goddesses
Than mortal creatures, graceful and discreet
Expert in amorous arts, enchanting tongues
Persuasive, virgin majesty with mild
And sweet allay'd, yet terrible to approach,
Skill'd to retire, and in retiring draw
Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.
Such objects hath the power to soften and tame
Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow,
Enerve, and with voluptuous hope dissolve,
Draw out with credulous desire, and lead
At will the manliest, resolute breast,
As the magnetic hardest iron draws.
Women, when nothing else, beguil'd the heart
Of wisest Solomon, and made him build,
And made him bow to the gods of his wives.

To whom quick answer Satan thus return'd :
Belial, in much uneven scale thou weigh'st
All others by thyself : because of old
Thou thyself doat'dst on womankind, admiring
Their shape, their colour, and attractive grace,
None are, thou think'st but taken with such toys.
Before the flood, thou, with thy lusty crew,
False titled sons of God, roaming the earth,

Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men,
And coupled with them, and begot a race.
Have not we seen, or by relation heard,
In courts and regal chambers how thou lurk'st
In wood, or grove, by mossy fountain side :
In valley, or green meadow, to way-lay
Some beauty rare, Calisto, Clymene,
Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,
Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more
Too long, then lay'st thy 'scapes on names ador'd,
Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan,
Satyr, or Faun, or Sylvan ? But these haunts
Delight not all ; among the sons of men,
How many have with a smile made small account
Of beauty and her lures, easily scorn'd
All her assaults, on worthier things intent ?
Remember that Pellean conquerer,
A youth, how all the beauties of the east
He slightly view'd, and slightly overpass'd :
How he surnam'd of Africa, dismiss'd
In his prime youth the fair Iberian maid.
For Solomon, he liv'd at ease, and full
Of honour, wealth high fare, aim'd not beyond
Higher design than to enjoy his state ;
Thence to the bait of woman lay expos'd :
But he whom we attempt, is wiser far
Than Solomom, of more exalted mind,
Made and set wholly on th' accomplishment
Of greatest things : what woman will you find,
Though of this age the wonder and the fame,
On whom his leisure will vouchsafe an eye
Of fond desire ? or should she confident,
As sitting queen ador'd on beauty's throne,
Descend with all her winning charms begirt
To enamour, as the zone of Venus once
Wrought that effect on Jove, so fables tell ;
How would one look from his majestic brow
Seated as on the top of virtue's hill,
Discount'nance her despis'd, and put to rout

All her array ; her female pride deject,
Or turn to reverent awe ? For beauty stands
In th' admiration only of weak minds
Led captive ; cease to admire, and all her plumes
Fall flat, and shrink into a trivial toy,
At every sudden slighting quite abash'd :
Therefore, with manlier objects we must try
His constancy, with such as have more show
Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise ;
Rocks whereon greatest men have ofttest wreck'd ;
Or that which only seems to satisfy
Lawful desires of nature, not beyond :
And now I know he hungers where no food
Is to be found, in the wide wilderness :
The rest commit to me, I shall let pass
No advantage, and his strength as oft assay.

He ceas'd, and heard their grant in loud acclaim :
Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band
Of spirits likest to himself in guile
To be at hand, and at his beck appear,
If cause were to unfold some active scene
Of various persons, each to know his part ;
Then to the desert takes with these his flight ;
Where still from shade to shade the Son of God
After forty days fasting, had remain'd,
Now hung'ring first, and to himself thus said :
Where will this end ? Four times ten days I've
pass'd

Wand'ring this woody maze, and human food
Nor tasted, nor had appetite ; that fast
To virtue I impute not, or count part
Of what I suffer here ; if nature need not,
Or God support nature without repast
Though needing, what praise is it to endure ?
But now I feel I hunger, which declares
Nature hath need of what she asks ; yet God
Can satisfy that need some other way,
Though hunger still remain ; so it remain
Without this body's wasting, I content me,

And from the sting of famine, fear no harm
Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts that feed
Me, hung'ring more to do my Father's will."

It was the hour of night, when thus the Son
Commun'd in silent walk, then laid him down
Under the hospitable covert nigh
Of trees thick interwoven; there he slept,
And dream'd, as appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet;
Him thought he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing even and morn,
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they
brought:

He saw the prophet also how he fled
Into the desert, and how there he slept
Under a juniper; then how awak'd
He found his supper on the coals prepar'd,
And by the angel was bid rise and eat,
And eat the second time after repose,
The strength whereof suffic'd him forty days;
Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.
Thus wore out night; and now the herald lark
Left his ground nest, high tow'ring to descry
The morn's approach, and greet her with his song.
As lightly from his grassy couch up rose
Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream,
Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting wak'd:
Up to a hill anon his steps he rear'd,
From whose high top to ken the prospect round,
If cottage were in view, sheep-cote or herd;
But cottage, herd, or sheep-cote none he saw;
Only in a bottom saw a pleasant grove,
With chaunt of tuneful birds resounding loud:
Thither he bent his way, determin'd there
To rest at noon, and enter'd soon the shade
High roof'd, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,
That open'd in the midst a woody scene:

Nature's own work it seem'd, (nature taught art;) And to a superstitious eye the haunt Of wood-gods and wood-nymphs : he view'd it round, When suddenly a man before him stood, Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad, As one in city, or court, or palace bred : And with fair speech these words to him address'd :

With granted leave officious I return, But much more wonder that the Son of God In this wild solitude so long should bide Of all things destitute, and well I know Not without hunger. Others of some note As story tells, have trod this wilderness ; The fugitive bond-woman with her son, Outcast Nebaioth, yet found here relief By a providing angel ; all the race Of Israel here had famish'd, had not God Rain'd from heaven manna ; and that prophet bold, Native of Thebez, wand'ring here was fed Twice by a voice inviting him to eat : Of thee these forty days none hath regard, Forty and more deserted here indeed.

To whom thus Jesus : what conclud'st thou hence ? They all had need, I as thou seest have none.

How hast thou hunger then ? Satan replied : Tell me if food were now before thee set Wouldst thou not eat ? Thereafter as I like The giver, answer'd Jesus. Why should thou Cause thy refusal ? said the subtle fiend. Hast thou not right to all created things ? Owe not all creatures by just right to thee Duty and service, not to stay till bid, But tender all their power ? Nor mention I Meats by the law unclean, or offer'd first To idols, those young Daniel could refuse ; Nor proffer'd by an enemy ; though who Would scruple that, with want oppress'd ? Behold Nature asham'd, or better to express, Troubled that thou shouldst hunger, hath purvey'd

From all the elements her choicest store
To treat thee as beseems, and as her Lord
With honour, only deign to sit and eat.

He spake no dream ; for as his words had end,
Our Saviour, lifting up his eyes, beheld
In ample space, under the broadest shade,
A table richly spread in regal mode,
With dishes pil'd, and meats of noblest sort
And savour, beasts of chace, or fowl of game,
In pastry built, or from the spit, or boil'd,
Gris-amber-steam'd ; all fish from sea or shore,
Freshet, or purling brook, of shell or fin,
And exquisitest name, for which was drain'd
Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.
Alas ! how simple, to these cates compar'd,
Was that crude apple that diverted Eve !
And at a stately side-board, by the wine,
That fragrant smell diffus'd, in order stood
Tall stripling youths, rich clad, of fairer hue
Than Ganymede or Hylas ; distant more
Under the trees, now tripp'd, now solemn stood,
Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades
With fruits and flowers from Amalthea's horn,
And ladies of th' Hesperides, that seem'd
Fairer than feign'd of old, or fabled since
Of fairy damsels met in forests wide
By knights of Logres, or of Lyones,
Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore :
And all the while harmonious airs were heard
Of chyming strings, or charming pipes, and winds
Of gentlest gales Arabian odours fann'd
From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells.
Such was the splendour, and the Tempter now
His invitation earnestly renew'd :

What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat ?
These are not fruits forbidden ; no interdict
Defends the touching of these viands pure ;
Their taste no knowledge works at least of evil.
But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,

Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.
All these are spirits of air, and woods, and springs,
Thy gentle ministers, who come to pay
Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord ;
What doubt'st thou, Son of God? sit down and eat.

To whom thus Jesus temp'rately replied :
Said'st thou not that to all things I had right ?
And who withholds my power that right to use :
Shall I receive by gift what of my own,
When and where likes me best, I can command ?
I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
Command a table in this wilderness,
And call swift flights of angels ministrant,
Array'd in glory, on my cup t' attend :
Why shouldst thou then obtrude this diligence,
In vain, where no acceptance it can find ?
And with my hunger what hast thou to do ?
Thy pompous delicacies I contemn,
And count thy specious gifts no gifts, but guile.

To whom thus answer'd Satan malcontent :
That I have also power to give thou seest ;
If of that power I bring thee voluntary
What I might have bestow'd on whom I pleas'd,
And rather opportunely in this place
Chose to impart to thy apparent need,
Why shouldst thou not accept it? But I see
What I can do or offer is suspect ;
Of these things others quickly will dispose,
Whose pains have earn'd the far fetcht spoil.
With that both table and provision vanish quite,
With sound of harpies' wings, and talons heard :
Only th' importune Tempter sill remain'd,
And with these words his temptation pursu'd :

By hunger, that each other creature tames,
Thou art not to be harm'd, therefore not mov'd :
Thy temperance invincible besides,
For no allurement yields to appetite,
And all thy heart is set on high designs,
High actions ; but wherewith to be achiev'd ?

Great acts require great means of enterprize ;
Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
A carpenter thy father known, thyself
Bred up in poverty and straits at home,
Lost in a desert here, and hunger-bit ;
Which way or from what hope dost thou aspire
To greatness ? whence authority deriv'st ?
What followers, what retinue canst thou gain,
Or at thy heels the dizzy multitude,
Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost ?
Money brings honour, friends, conquest, and realms.
What rais'd Antipater, the Edomite,
And his son Herod plac'd on Juda's throne,
(Thy throne) but gold, that got him puissant friends ?
Therefore, if at great things thou wouldst arrive,
Get riches first, get wealth and treasure heap,
Not difficult, if thou hearken to me :
Riches are mine, fortune is in my hand ;
They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain,
While virtue, valour, wisdom, sit in want.

To whom thus Jesus patiently replied :
Yet wealth without these three is impotent
To gain dominion, or to keep it gain'd.
Witness those ancient empires of the earth,
In height of all their flowing wealth dissolv'd :
But men endu'd with these have oft attain'd
In lowest poverty to highest deeds ;
Gideon and Jephtha, and the shepherd lad,
Whose offspring on the throne of Judah sat
So many ages, and shall yet regain
That seat, and reign in Israel without end.
Among the Heathen, (for throughout the world
To me is not unknown what hath been done
Worthy of memorial,) canst thou not remember
Quintius, Fabricius, Curius, Regulus ?
For I esteem those names of men so poor
Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
Riches, though offer'd from the hand of kings.
And what in me seems wanting but that I

May also in this poverty as soon
Accomplish what they did perhaps, and more ?
Extol not riches then, the toil of fools,
The wise man's cumbrance, if not snare, more apt
To slacken virtue, and abate her edge,
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise.
What if with like aversion I reject
Riches and realms ; yet not for that, a crown
Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns,
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights
To him who wears the regal diadem,
When on his shoulders each man's burden lies ;
For therein stands the office of a king,
His honour, virtue, merit, and chief praise,
That for the public all this weight he bears,
Yet he who reigns within himself, and rules
Passions, desires, and fears, is more a king ;
Which every wise and virtuous man attains ;
And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
Cities of men, or headstrong multitudes,
Subject himself to anarchy within,
Or lawless passions in him which he serves.
But to guide nations in the way of truth
By saving doctrine, and from error lead
To know, and knowing, worship God aright,
Is yet more kingly : this attracts the soul,
Governs the inner man, the nobler part ;
That other o'er the body only reigns,
And oft by force, which to a generous mind
So reigning, can be no sincere delight.
Besides, to give a kingdom hath been thought
Greater and nobler done, and to lay down
Far more magnanimous than to assume.
Riches are needless then, both for themselves,
And for thy reason why they should be sought,
To gain a sceptre, ofttest better miss'd.

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK III.

So spake the Son of God, and Satan stood
A while as mute, confounded what to say,
What to reply, confuted, and convinc'd
Of his weak arguing, and fallacious drift;
At length, collecting all his serpent wiles,
With soothing words renew'd, him thus accosts :

I see thou know'st what is of use to know,
What best to say canst say, to do canst do ;
Thy actions to thy words accord, thy words
To thy large heart give utterance due, thy heart
Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.
Should kings and nations from thy mouth consult,
Thy counsel would be as the oracle
Urim and Thummim, those oraculous gems
On Aaron's breast ; or tongue of seers old,
Infallible : or wert thou sought to deeds
That might require th' array of war, thy skill
Of conduct would be such, that all the world
Could not sustain thy prowess, or subsist
In battle, though against thy few in arms.
These godlike virtues wherefore dost thou hide,
Affecting private life, or more obscure
In savage wilderness ? wherefore deprive
All earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself
The fame and glory, glory the reward

That sole excites to high attempts, the flame
Of most erected spirits, most temper'd pure
Etherial, who all pleasures else despise,
All treasures and all gain esteem as dross,
And dignities and powers all but the highest ?
Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe ; the son
Of Macedonian Philip had ere these
Won Asia, and the throne of Cyrus held
At his dispose ; young Scipio had brought down
The Carthaginian pride ; young Pompey quell'd
The Pontic king, and in triumph had rode.
Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,
Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.
Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,
The more he grew in years, the more inflam'd
With glory, wept that he had liv'd so long
Inglorious but thou yet art not too late.

To whom our Saviour calmly thus replied :
Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealth
For empire's sake, nor empire to affect
For glory's sake, by all thy argument.
For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
'The people's praise, if always praise unmix'd ?
And what the people but a herd confus'd,
A miscellaneous rabble, who extol
Things vulgar, and well weigh'd, scarce worth the
praise ?

They praise, and they admire they know not what,
And know not whom, but as one leads the other .
And what delight to be by such extol'd,
To live upon their tongues, and be their talk,
Of whom to be disprais'd were no small praise ?
His lot who dares be singularly good.
Th' intelligent among them and the wise
Are few, and glory scarce of few is rais'd.
This is true glory and renown, when God
Looking on th' earth, with approbation marks
The just man, and divulges him through heaven
To all his angels, who with true applause

Recount his praises : thus he did to Job,
When to extend his fame through heaven and earth,
As thou to thy reproach may'st well remember,
He ask'd thee, Hast thou seen my servant Job ?
Famous he was in heaven, on earth less known ;
Where glory is false glory, attributed
To things not glorious, men not worthy of fame.
They err who count it glorious to subdue
By conquest far and wide, to over-run
Large countries, and in field great battles win,
Great cities by assault : what do these worthies,
But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave
Peaceable nations neighb'ring or remote,
Made captive ; yet deserving freedom more
Than those their conquerors, who leave behind
Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove,
And all the flourishing works of peace destroy,
Then swell with pride, and must be titled gods,
Great benefactors of mankind, deliverers,
Worshipp'd with temple, priest, and sacrifice ?
One is the son of Jove, of Mars the other ;
Till conqu'ror Death discovers them scarce men,
Rolling in brutish vices, and deform'd,
Violent or shameful death their due reward.
But if there be in glory aught of good,
It may by means far different be attain'd,
Without ambition, war, or violence ;
By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
By patience, temperance : I mention still
Him whom thy wrongs, with saintly patience borne,
Made famous in a land and times obscure ;
Who names not now with honour patient Job ?
Poor Socrates, (who next more memorable ?)
By what he taught, and suffer'd for so doing,
For truth's sake suffering death unjust, lives now
Equal in fame to proudest conquerors.
Yet, if for fame and glory aught be done,
Aught suffer'd ; if young African for fame
His wasted country freed from Punic rage,

Shall I seek glory then, as vain men seek,
Oft not deserved? I seek not mine, but his
Who sent me, and thereby witness whence I am.

To whom the Tempter murm'ring thus replied :
Think not so slight of glory ; therein least
Resembling thy great Father : he seeks glory,
And for his glory all things made, all things
Orders and governs ; nor content in heaven,
By all his angels glorified, requires
Glory from men, from all men, good or bad,
Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption ;
Above all sacrifice, or hallow'd gift,
Glory he requires, and glory he receives
Promiscuous from all nations, Jew or Greek,
Or barbarous, nor exception hath declar'd :
From us his foes pronounc'd, glory he exacts.

To whom our Saviour fervently replied :
And reason ; since his word all things produc'd,
Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
But to show forth his goodness, and impart
His good communicable to every soul
Freely ; of whom what could he less expect
Than glory and benediction, that is, thanks,
The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense
From them who could return him nothing else,
And not returning that, would likeliest render
Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy ?
Hard recompense, unsuitable return
For so much good, so much beneficence,
But why should man seek glory, who of his own
Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs
But condemnation, ignominy, and shame ?
Who, for so many benefits receiv'd,
Turn'd recreant to God, ingrate and false,
And so of all true good himself despoil'd ;
Yet sacrilegious, to himself would take
That which to God alone of right belongs

Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,
That who advance his glory not their own,
Them he himself to glory will advance.

So spake the Son of God : and here again
Satan had not to answer, but stood struck
With guilt of his own sin, for he himself,
Insatiable of glory, had lost all :
Yet of another plea bethought him soon.

Of glory, as thou wilt, said he, so deem ;
Worth or not worth the seeking, let it pass :
But to a kingdom thou art born, ordain'd
To sit upon thy father David's throne :
By mother's side thy father : though thy right
Be now in powerful hands, that will not part
Easily from possession won with arms :
Judea now, and all the promis'd land,
Reduc'd a province under Roman yoke,
Obeys Tiberius : nor is always rul'd
With temp'rate sway ; oft have they violated
The temple, oft the law with foul affronts,
Abominations rather, as did once
Antiochus : and think'st thou to regain
Thy right by sitting still, or thus retiring ?
So did not Maccabeus : he indeed
Retir'd into the desert but with arms :
And o'er a mighty king so oft prevail'd,
That by strong hand his family obtain'd,
Tho' priests, the crown, and David's throne usurp'd.
With Modin and her suburbs once content.
If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal
And duty ; zeal and duty are not slow ;
But on occasion's forelock watchful wait.
They themselves rather are occasion best,
Zeal of thy Father's house, duty to free
Thy country from her heathen servitude ;
So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify
The prophets old, who sung thy endless reign ;
The happier reign the sooner it begins :
Reign then ; what canst thou better do the while ?

To whom our Saviour answer thus return'd :
All things are best fulfill'd in their due time,
And time there is for all things truth hath said.
If of my reign prophetic writ hath told
That it should never end, so when begin
The Father in his purpose hath decreed,
He in whose hand all times and seasons roll.
What if he hath decreed that I shall first
Be tried in humble state, and things adverse,
By tribulations, injuries, insults,
Contempts and scorns, and snares, and violence,
Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting,
Without distrust or doubt, that he may know
What I can suffer, how obey ? Who best
Can suffer, best can do ; best reign, who first
Well hath obey'd ; just trial ere I merit
My exaltation without change or end.
But what concerns it thee when I begin
My everlasting kingdom, why art thou
Solicitous, what moves thy inquisition ?
Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,
And my promotion will be thy destruction ?

To whom the Tempter, inly rack'd, replied :
Let that come when it comes ; all hope is lost
Of my reception into grace ; what worse ?
For where no hope is left, is left no fear :
If there be worse, the expectation more
Of worse torments me than the feeling can.
I would be at the worst ; worst is my port,
My harbour, and my ultimate repose,
The end I would attain, my final good.
My error was my error, and my crime
My crime ; whatever for itself condemn'd,
And will alike be punish'd, whether thou
Reign or reign not ; though to that gentle brow
Willingly I could fly, and hope thy reign,
From that placid aspect and meek regard,
Rather than aggravate my evil state,
Would stand between me and thy Father's ire,

(Whose ire I dread more than the fire of hell,)
A shelter, and a kind of shading cool
Interposition, as a summer's cloud.
If I then to the worst that can be haste,
Why move thy feet so slow to what is best,
Happiest both to thyself, and all the world,
That thou who worthiest art shouldst be their King
Perhaps thou linger'st in deep thoughts detain'd
Of th' enterprise so hazardous and high ;
No wonder ; for though in thee be united
What of perfection can in man be found,
Or human nature can receive, consider
Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent
At home, scarce view'd the Galilean towns,
And once a year Jerusalem, few days
Short sojourn ; and what thence couldst thou observe ?
The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,
Empires, and monarchs, and their radiant courts,
Best school of best experience, quickest insight
In all things that to greatest actions lead.
The wisest, unexperienc'd will be ever
Timorous and loath, with novice modesty,
(As he who seeking asses found a kingdom,)
Irresolute, unhardy, unadvent'rous :
But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit
Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes
The monarchies of th' earth, their pomp and state,
Sufficient introduction to inform
Thee, of thyself so apt in regal arts,
And regal mysteries, that thou may'st know
How best their opposition to withstand.
With that (such power was given him then) he took
The Son of God up to a mountain high.
It was a mountain at whose verdant feet
A spacious plain, outstretch'd in circuit wide,
Lay pleasant ; from his side two rivers flow'd,
Th' one winding, th' other straight, and left between
Fair champaign, with less rivers interven'd,
Then meeting, join'd their tribute to the sea :

Fertile of corn the glebe, of oil and wine ;
With herds the pastures throng'd, with flocks the
hills ;

Huge cities, and high tower'd, that well might seem
The seats of mightiest monarchs ; and so large
The prospect was, that here and there was room
For barren desert, fountainless and dry.

To this high mountain top the Tempter brought
Our Saviour, and new train of words began :

Well have we speeded, and o'er hill and dale,
Forest, and field, and flood, temples and towers,
Cut shorter many a league ; here thou behold'st
Assyria and her empire's ancient bounds,
Araxes and the Caspian lake ; thence on
As far as Indus east, Euphrates west,
And oft beyond ; to south the Persian bay,
And inaccessible the Arabian drouth :
Here Nineveh, of length within her wall
Several days journey, built by Ninus old,
Of that first golden monarchy the seat.
And seat of Salmanassar, whose success
Israel in long captivity still mourns ;
There Babylon, the wonder of all tongues,
As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice
Judah and all thy father David's house
Led captive, and Jerusalem laid waste,
Till Cyrus set them free ; Persepolis
His city there thou seest, and Bactra there :
Ecbatana her structure vast there shows,
And Hecatompylos her hundred gates ;
There Susa by Choaspes' amber stream,
The drink of none but kings : of later fame,
Built by Emathian, or by Parthian hands,
The great Seleucia, Nisibis : and there
Artaxata, Teredon, Ctesiphon,
Turning with easy eye thou may'st behold.
All these the Parthian, now some ages past,
By great Arsaces led, who founded first
That empire, under his dominion holds,

From the luxurious kings of Antioch won.
And just in time thou com'st to have a view
Of his great power; for now the Parthian king
In Ctesiphon hath gather'd all his host
Against the Scythian, whose incursions wild
Have wasted Sogdiana; to her aid
He marches now in haste; see, though from far
His thousands, in what martial equipage
They issue forth, steel bows and shafts their arms;
Of equal dread in flight, or in pursuit;
All horsemen, in which fight they most excel;
See how in warlike muster they appear,
In rhombs and wedges, and half-moons, and wings.

He look'd, and saw what numbers numberless
The city gates out-pour'd, light armed troops
In coats of mail and military pride;
In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
Prancing their riders bore, the flower and choice
Of many provinces from bound to bound;
From Arachosia, from Candaor east,
And Margiana, to the Hyrcanian cliffs
Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales;
From Atropatia, and the neighb'ring plains
Of Adiabene, Media, and the south
Of Susiana, to Balsara's heaven.
He saw them in their forms of battle rang'd,
How quick they wheel'd, and flying behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowy showers against the face
Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight;
The field, all iron, cast a gleaming brown;
Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn
Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,
Chariots or elephants indors'd with towers
Of archers, nor of lab'ring pioneers
A multitude, with spades and axes arm'd
To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,
Or where plain was, raise hill, or overlay
With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke;

Mules after these, camels and dromedaries,
And wagons fraught with utensils of war.
Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
When Agrican with all his northern powers
Besieg'd Albracca, as romances tell,
The city of Gallaphrone, from whence to win
The fairest of her sex Angelica
His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,
Both Paynim, and the peers of Charlemaine.
Such and so numerous was their chivalry:
At sight whereof the fiend yet more presum'd,
And to our Saviour thus his words renew'd:

That thou may'st know I seek not to engage
Thy virtue, and not every way secure
On no slight grounds thy safety; hear, and mark
To what end I have brought thee hither, and shown
All this fair sight: thy kingdom, though foretold
By prophet or by angel, unless thou
Endeavour, as thy father David did,
Thou never shalt obtain; prediction still
In all things, and all men, supposes means;
Without means us'd, what it predicts revokes.
But say thou wert possess'd of David's throne
By free consent of all, none opposite,
Samaritan or Jew; how couldst thou hope
Long to enjoy it quiet and secure,
Between two such enclosing enemies
Roman and Parthian? therefore one of these
Thou must make sure thy own, the Parthian first,
By my advice, as nearer, and of late
Found able by invasion to annoy
Thy cuntry, and captive lead away her kings.
Antigonus, and old Hyrcanus bound,
Maugre the Roman; it shall be my task
To render thee the Parthian at dispose:
Choose which thou wilt, by conquest or by league.
By him thou shalt regain, without him not,
That which alone can truly reinstall thee
In David's royal seat, his true successor,

Deliverance of thy brethren, those ten tribes
Whose offspring in his territory yet serve,
In Habor, and among the Medes dispers'd ;
Ten sons of Jacob, two of Joseph lost
Thus long from Israel, serving, as of old
Their fathers in the land of Egypt serv'd,
This offer sets before thee to deliver.
These if from servitude thou shalt restore
To their inheritance, then, nor till then,
Thou on the throne of David in full glory,
From Egypt to Euphrates and beyond,
Shalt reign, and Rome or Cæsar need not fear.

To whom our Saviour answer'd thus, unmov'd :
Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm,
And fragile arms, much instrument of war
Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,
Before mine eyes thou hast set : and in my ear
Vented much policy, and projects deep
Of enemies, of aids, battles and leagues,
Plausible to the world, to me worth nought.
Means I must use thou say'st, prediction else
Will unpredict, and fail me of the throne :
My time I told thee (and that time for thee
Were better farthest off) is not yet come :
When that comes, think not thou to find me slack
On my part aught endeav'ring, or to need
Thy politic maxims, or that cumbersome
Luggage of war there shown me, argument
Of human weakness rather than of strength.
My brethren, as thou call'st them, those ten tribes,
I must deliver, if I mean to reign
David's true heir, and his full sceptre sway
To just extent over all Israel's sons ;
But whence to thee this zeal, where was it then
For Isreal or for David, or his throne,
When thou stood'st up his tempter to the pride
Of numb'ring Israel, which cost the lives
Of threescore and ten thousand Israelites
By three days' pestilence ? such was thy zeal

To Israel then, the same that now to me.
As for those captive tribes, themselves were they
Who wrought their own captivity, fell off
From God to worship calves, the deities
Of Egypt, Baal next and Ashtaroth,
And all th' idolatries of Heathen round,
Besides their other worse than heath'nish crimes ;
Nor in the land of their captivity
Humbled themselves, or penitent besought
The God of their forefathers ; but so died
Impenitent, and left a race behind
Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce
From Gentiles, but by circumcision vain,
And God with idols to their worship join'd.
Should I of these the liberty regard,
Who freed as to their ancient patrimony,
Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreform'd,
Headlong would follow ; and to their gods pernap
Of Bethel and of Dan ? no, let them serve
Their enemies who serve idols with God.
Yet he at length, time to himself best known,
Rememb'ring Abraham, by some wonderous call
May bring them back repentent and sincere,
And at their passing cleave th' Assyrian flood,
While to their native land with joy they haste,
As the Red Sea and Jordan once he cleft,
When to the promis'd land their fathers pass'd :
To his due time and providence I leave them.

So spake Israel's true King, and to the fiend
Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles :
So fares it when with truth falshood contends.

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK IV.

PERPLEX'D and troubled at his bad success
The Tempter stood, nor had what to reply,
Discover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope
So oft, and the persuasive rhetoric
That sleek'd his tongue, and won so much on **Eve**,
So little here, nay lost ; but Eve was Eve ;
This far his over-match, who self-deceiv'd
And rash, beforehand had no better weigh'd
The strength he was to cope with, or his own :
But as a man who had been matchless held
In cunning over-reach'd where least he thought,
To salve his credit, and for very spite,
Still will be tempting him who foils him still,
And never cease, though to his shame the more ;
Or as a swarm of flies in vintage time,
About the wine-press where sweet must is pour'd,
Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound ;
Or surging waves against a solid rock ;
Though all to shivers dash'd, th' assault renew,
Vain batt'ry, and in froth or bubbles end ;
So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,
Yet gives not o'er though desp'rate of success,
And his vain importunity pursues.
He brought our Saviour to the western side

Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
Another plain, long, but in breadth not wide,
Wash'd by the southern sea, and on the north
To equal length back'd with a ridge of hills,
That screen'd the fruits of th' earth and seats of men
From cold Sep'tentrion blasts, thence in the midst
Divided by a river of whose banks
On each side an imperial city stood,
With towers and temples proudly elevate
On seven small hills, with palaces adorn'd,
Porches and theatres, baths, aqueducts,
Statues and trophies and triumphal arcs,
Gardens and groves presented to his eyes,
Above the height of mountains interpos'd,
By what strange parallax or optic skill
Of vision, multiplied through air or glass
Of telescope, were curious to inquire :
And now the Tempter thus his silence broke :

The city which thou seest no other deem
Than great and glorious Rome, queen of the earth
So far renown'd, and with the spoils enrich'd
Of nations ; there the capitol thou seest
Above the rest lifting his stately head
On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel
Impregnable ; and there Mount Palatine,
Th' imperial palace, compass huge, and high
The structure, skill of noblest architects,
With gilded battlements, conspicuous far,
Turrets and terraces, and glitt'ring spires.
Many a fair edifice besides, more like
Houses of gods, (so well I have dispos'd
My airy microscope,) thou may'st behold
Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs,
Carv'd work, the hand of fam'd artificers
In cedar, marble, ivory or gold :
Thence to the gates cast round thine eye and see
What conflux issuing forth, or entering in ;
Prætors, proconsuls to their provinces
Hasting, or on return, in robes of state

Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power,
Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings :
Or embassies from regions far remote
In various habits, on the Appian road,
Or on th' Emilian ; some from farthest south,
Syene, and where the shadow both way falls,
Meroe Nilotic isle, and more to west,
The realm of Bocchus to the Black-moor sea ;
From th' Asian kings and Parthian among these,
From India and the golden Chersonese,
And utmost Indian Isle Taprobane,
Dusk faces with white silken turbans wreath'd ;
From Gallia, Gades, and the British west ;
Germans and Scythians, and Sarmathians north,
Beyond Danubius to the Tauric pool,
All nations now to Rome obedience pay,
'To Rome's great emperor, whose wide domain,
In ample territory, wealth and power,
Civility of manners arts and arms,
And long renown, thou justly may'st prefer,
Before the Parthian ; these two thrones except,
The rest are barb'rous, and scarce worth the sight,
Shar'd among petty kings too far remov'd :
These having shown thee, I have shown thee all
The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory.
This emp'ror hath no son, and now is old,
Old and lascivious, and from Rome retir'd
To Capræ, an island small but strong,
On the Campanian shore, with purpose there
His horrid lust in private to enjoy,
Committing to a wicked favourite
All public cares, and yet of him suspicious ;
Hated of all, and hating ; with what ease,
Endu'd with regal virtues, as thou art,
Appearing, and beginning noble deeds.
Might'st thou expel this monster from his throne,
Now made a sty, and in his place ascending,
A victor people free from servile yoke ?
And with my help thou mayst : to me the power

Is given, and by that right I give it thee.
Aim, therefore, at no less than all the world;
Aim at the highest; without the highest attain'd
Will be for thee no sitting, or not long
On David's throne, be prophesied what will.

To whom the Son of God, unmov'd, replied:
Nor doth this grandeur, and majestic show
Of luxury, though call'd magnificence,
More than of arms before, allure mine eye,
Much less my mind; though thou shouldst add to tell
Their sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts,
On citron tables or Atlantic stone,
(For I have also heard, perhaps have read,)
Their wines of Setia, Cales, and Falerne,
Chios, and Crete, and how they quaff in gold,
Crystal and myrrhine cups, imboss'd with gems
And studs of pearl; to me shouldst tell who thirst
And hunger still: then embassies thou show'st
From nations far and nigh: what honour that,
But tedious waste of time, to sit and hear
So many hollow compliments and lies,
Outlandish flatteries? Then proceed'st to talk
Of th' emperor, how easily subdu'd,
How gloriously: I shall, thou say'st, expel
A brutish monster: what if I withal
Expel a devil who first made him such?
Let his tormentor conscience, find him out;
For him I was not sent; nor yet to free
That people, victor once, now vile and base,
Deservedly made vassal, who once just,
Frugal and mild, and temp'rate, conquer'd well,
But govern ill the nations under yoke,
Peeling their provinces, exhausted all
By lust and rapine? first ambitious grown
Of triumph, that insulting vanity;
Then cruel, by their sports to blood inur'd
Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts expos'd;
Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier still,
And from the daily scene effeminate,

What wise and valiant man would seek to free
These thus degenerate, by themselves enslav'd,
Or could of inward slaves, make outward free?
Know, therefore, when my season comes to sit
On David's throne, it shall be like a tree
Spreading and overshadowing all the earth;
Or as a stone that shall to peices dash
All monarchies besides throughout the world;
And of my kingdom there shall be no end:
Means there shall be to this; but what the means,
Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell.

To whom the Tempter impudent replied:

I see all offers made by me how slight
Thou valu'st, because offer'd, and reject'st:
Nothing will please the difficult and nice,
Or nothing more than still to contradict:
On th' other side know also thou, that I
On what I offer set as high esteem,
Nor what I part with mean to give for naught;
All these, which in a moment thou behold'st,
The kingdoms of the world to thee I give;
For, given to me, I give to whom I please;
No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else,
On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,
And worship me as thy superior lord,
Easily done, and hold them all of me;
For what can less so great a gift deserve?

Whom thus our Saviour answer'd with disdain:
I never lik'd thy talk, thy offers less:
Now both abhor, since thou hast dar'd to utter
Th' abominable terms, impious condition;
But I endure the time, till which expir'd,
Thou hast permission on me. It is written
The first of all commandments, Thou shalt worship
The Lord thy God, and only Him shalt serve;
And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound
To worship thee accurs'd, now more accurs'd
For this attempt, bolder than that on Eve,
And more blasphemous? which expect to rue.

The kingdoms of the world to thee were given,
Permitted rather, and by thee usurp'd ;
Other donation none thou canst produce.
If given, by whom, but by the King of kings,
God over all supreme ? if given to thee,
By thee how fairly is the giver now
Repaid ? But gratitude in thee is lost
Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame,
As offer them to me, the Son of God,
To me my own, on such abhorred pact,
That I fall down and worship thee as God ?
Get thee behind me ; plain thou now appear'st
That evil one Satan ; for ever damn'd.

To whom the fiend, with fear abash'd, replied :
Be not so sore offended, Son of God,
(Though sons of God both angels are and men,)
If I, to try whether in higher sort
Than these thou bear'st that title, have propos'd
What both from men and angels I receive,
Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth
Nations besides from all the quarter'd winds,
God of this world invok'd, and world beneath :
Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold
To me so fatal, me it most concerns.
The trial hath indamag'd thee no way,
Rather more honour left and more esteem ;
Me nought advantag'd, missing what I aim'd,
Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,
The kingdoms of this world ; I shall no more
Advise thee ; gain them as thou canst, or not.
And thou thyself seem'st otherwise inclin'd
Than to a worldly crown, addicted more
To contemplation and profound dispute,
As by that early action may be judg'd,
When, slipping from thy mother's eye, thou went'st
Alone into the temple ; there was found
Among the gravest Rabbies, disputant
On points and questions fitting Moses' chair ;
Teaching, not taught ; the childhood shows the man,

As morning shows the day. Be famous then
By wisdom ; as thy empire must extend
So let extend thy mind o'er all the world
In knowledge, all things in it comprehend :
All knowledge is not couch'd in Moses' law,
The Pentateuch, or what the prophets wrote ;
The Gentiles also know, and write and teach
To admiration, led by nature's light ;
And with the Gentiles much thou must converse,
Ruling them by persuasion, as thou meanest.
Without their learning how wilt thou with them,
Or they with thee, hold conversation meet ?
How wilt thou reason with them, how refute
Their idolisms, traditions, paradoxes ?
Error by his own arms is best evinc'd.
Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount,
Westward, much nearer by south-west ; behold
Where on th' Ægean shore a city stands
Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil,
Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts
And eloquence, native to famous wits,
Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
City, or suburban, studious walks and shades ;
See there the olive grove of Academe,
Plato's retirement, where the attic bird
Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long ;
There flowery hill Hymettus with the sound
Of bees, industrious murmur oft invites
To studious musing ; there Ilissus rolls
His whisp'ring stream : within the walls then view
The schools of ancient sages ; his who bred
Great Alexander to subdue the world ;
Lyceum there, and painted Stoa next :
There thou shalt hear and learn the secret power
Of harmony, in tones and numbers hit
By voice or hand, and various-measur'd verse
Æolian charms and Dorian lyric odes,
And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,
Blind Melesigenes, thence Homer call'd,

Whose poem Phœbus challeng'd for his own.
Thence what the lofty grave tragedians taught
In chorus or iambic, teachers best
Of moral prudence, with délight receiv'd
In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
Of fate, and chance, and change in human life;
High actions, and high passions best describing.
Thence to the famous orators repair,
Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
Wièdled at will that fierce democratie,
Shook th' arsenal, and fulmin'd over Greece
To Macedon and Artaxerxes throne.
To sage philosophy next lend thine ear,
From heaven descended to the low-roof'd house,
Of Socrates; see there his tenement,
Whom, well inspir'd the oracle pronounc'd
Wisest of men; from whose mouth issued forth
Mellifluous streams, that water'd all the schools
Of Academics old and new, with those
Surnam'd Peripatetics, and the sect
Epicurean, and the Stoic severe;
These here revolve, or, as thou lik'st at home
Till time mature thee to a kingdom's weight;
These rules will render thee a king complete
Within thyself; much more with empire join'd.

To whom our Saviour sagely thus replied:
Think not but that I know these things, or think
I know them not; not therefore am I short
Of knowing what I ought: he who receives
Light from above, from the fountain of light,
No other doctrine needs, though granted true;
But these are false, or little else but dreams,
Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.
The first and wisest of them all profess'd
To know this only, that he nothing knew;
The next to fabling fell and smooth conceits;
A third sort doubted all things, though plain sense;
Others in virtue plac'd felicity,

But virtue join'd with riches and long life ;
In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease :
The Stoic last in philosophic pride,
By him call'd virtue ; and his virtuous man,
Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing,
Equals to God, oft shames not to prefer ;
As fearing God nor man, contemning all
Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life,
Which, when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can,
For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.
Alas, what can they teach, and not mislead,
Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,
And how the world began, and how man fell,
Degraded by himself, on grace depending ?
Much of the soul they talk, but all awry,
And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves
All glory arrogate, to God give none,
Rather accuse him under usual names,
Fortune and fate, as one regardless quite
Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these
True wisdom, finds her not ; or, by delusion
Far worse, her false resemblance only meets,
An empty cloud. However, many books,
Wise men have said, are wearisome : who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment equal or superior,
(And what he brings, what needs he else where seek
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep vers'd in books and shallow in himself,
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys,
And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge ;
As children gathering pebbles on the shore.
Or if I would delight my private hours
With music or with poem, where so soon
As in our native language can I find
That solace ? All our law and story strew'd
With hymns, our psalms with artful terms inscrib'd,
Our Hebrew songs and harps in Babylon,

That pleas'd so well our victor's ear, declare
That rather Greece from us these arts deriv'd ;
Ill imitated, while they loudest sing
The vices of their deities, and their own,
In fable, hymn, or song, so personating
Their gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.
Remove their swelling epithets, thick laid
As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,
Thin sown with aught of profit or delight,
Will far be found unworthy to compare
With Sion's songs, to all true tastes excelling,
Where God is prais'd aright, and godlike men,
The holiest of holies, and his saints ;
Such are from God inspir'd ; not such from thee,
Unless where moral virtue is express'd
By light of nature not in all quite lost.
Their orators thou then extoll'st, as those
The top of eloquence ; statist, indeed,
And lovers of their country, as may seem :
But herein to our profits far beneath,
As men divinely taught, and better teaching
The solid rules of civil government,
In their majestic unaffected style,
Than all the oratory of Greece and Rome.
In them is plainest taught, and easiest learn'd,
What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so ;
What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat :
These only with our law best form a king.

So spake the son of God : but Satan now,
Quite at a loss, for all his darts were spent,
Thus to our Saviour with stern brow replied :

Since neither wealth, nor honour, arms nor arts,
Kingdom nor empire, pleases thee, nor aught
By me propos'd in life contemplative,
Or active, tended on by glory, or fame,
What dost thou in this world ? the wilderness
For thee is fittest place ; I found thee there,
And thither will return thee ; yet remember
What I foretel thee ; soon thou shalt have cause

To wish thou never hadst rejected thus
Nicely or cautiously my offer'd aid,
Which would have set thee in short time with ease
On David's throne, or throne of all the world,
Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season,
When prophecies of thee are best fulfill'd.
Now contrary, if I read aught in heaven,
Or heaven write aught of fate, by what the stars
Voluminous, or single characters,
In their conjunction met, give me to spell ;
Sorrows and labours, opposition, hate
Attends thee, scorn's, reproaches, injuries,
Violence and stripes, and lastly, cruel death :
A kingdom they portend thee, but what kingdom
Real or allegoric, I discern not,
Nor when, eternal sure, as without end,
Without beginning ; for no date prefix'd
Directs me in the starry rubric set.

So saying, he took (for still he knew his power
Not yet expir'd) and to the wilderness
Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,
Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose,
As day-light sunk, and brought in lowering night,
Her shadowy offspring, unsubstantial both,
Privation mere of light and absent day.
Our Saviour, meek, and with untroubled mind,
After his airy jaunt, though hurried sore,
Hungry and cold, betook him to his rest,
Wherever, under some concourse of shades,
Whose branching arms thick intertwin'd might shield,
From dews and damps of night his shelter'd head,
But shelter'd slept in vain ; for at his head
The Tempter watch'd, and soon with ugly dreams
Disturb'd his sleep : and either tropic now
'Gan thunder, and both ends of heaven, the clouds,
From many a horrid rift abortive, pour'd
Fierce rain with lightning mix'd, water with fire
In ruin reconcil'd : nor slept the winds
Within their stony caves, but rush'd abroad

From the four hinges of the world, and fell
On the vex'd wilderness, whose tallest pines,
Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest oaks,
Bow'd their stiff necks, loaded with stormy blasts,
Or torn up sheer; ill wast thou shrouded then,
O patient Son of God, yet only stood'st
Unshaken: nor yet stay'd the terror there;
Infernal ghosts and hellish furies round
Environ'd thee; some howl'd, some yell'd, some
shriek'd,

Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou
Sat'st unappall'd in calm and sinless peace:
Thus pass'd the night so foul, till morning fair
Come forth with pilgrim steps in amice gray,
Who with her radiant finger still'd the roar
Of thunder, chas'd the clouds, and laid the winds,
And grisly spectres, which the fiend had rais'd
To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.
And now the sun with more effectual beams
Had cheer'd the face of earth, and dried the wet
From drooping plant, or drooping tree; the birds,
Who all things now behold more fresh and green
After a night of storm so ruinous,
Clear'd up their choicest notes in bush and spray,
To gratulate the sweet return of morn:
Nor yet amidst this joy and brightest morn
Was absent, after all his mischief done,
The Prince of Darkness glad would also seem
Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came,
Yet with no new device, they all were spent:
Rather by this his last affront resolv'd,
Desp'rate of better course, to vent his rage
And mad despite to be so oft repell'd.
Him walking on a sunny hill he found,
Back'd on the north and west by a thick wood;
Out of the wood he starts in wonted shape,
And in a careless mood thus to him said:

Fair morning yet betides thee, Son of God,
After a dismal night: I heard the wrack

As earth and sky would mingle ; but myself
Was distant ; and these flaws, though mortals fear
 them

As dang'rous to the pillar'd frame of heaven,
Or to the earth's dark basis underneath,
Are to the main as inconsiderable
And harmless, if not wholesome, as a sneeze
To man's less universe, and soon are gone ;
Yet as being oft times noxious where they light
On man, beast, plant, wastful and turbulent,
Like turbulencies in th' affairs of men,
Over whose heads they roar and seem to point,
They oft fore-signify and threaten ill :
This tempest at this desert most was bent ;
Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject
The perfect season offer'd with my aid
To win thy destin'd seat, but wilt prolong
All to the push of fate pursue thy way,
Of gaining David's throne no man knows when,
For both the when and how is no where told,
Thou shalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt ;
For angels have proclaim'd it, but concealing
The time and means : each act is rightliest done,
Not when it must, but when it may be best.
If thou observe not this, be sure to find
What I foretold thee, many an hard assay
Of dangers, and adversities, and pains,
Ere thou of Israel's sceptre get fast hold ;
Whereof this ominous night that clos'd thee round,
So many terrors, voices, prodigies,
May warn thee, as a sure foregoing sign.

So talk'd he while the Son of God went on,
And stay'd not, but in brief him answer'd thus :

Me worse than wet thou find'st not ; other harm
Those terrors which thou speak'st of did me none ;
I never fear'd they could, though noising loud,
And threat'ning nigh ; what they can do as signs
Betokening, or ill-boding, I contemn

As false portents, not sent from God, but thee :
Who knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,
Obtrud'st thy offer'd aid, that I accepting
At least might seem to hold all power of thee,
Ambitious spirit, and wouldst be thought my God
And storm'st refus'd, thinking to terrify
Me to thy will : desist, thou art discern'd
And toil'st in vain, nor me in vain molest.

To whom the fiend, now swoln with rage, replied
Then hear, O Son of David, Virgin-born ;
For Son of God to me is yet in doubt ;
Of the Messiah I have heard foretold
By all the prophets : of thy birth, at length
Announc'd by Gabriel, with the first I knew,
And of th' angelic song in Bethlehem field,
On thy birth-night, that sung thee Saviour born.
From that time seldom have I ceas'd to eye
Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred ;
Till at the ford of Jordan, whither all
Flock to the Baptist, I among the rest
Though not to be baptiz'd, by voice from heaven
Heard thee pronounc'd, the Son of God belov'd.
Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn
In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
The Son of God, which bears no single sense :
The Son of God I also am, or was ;
And if I was, I am ; relation stands :
All men are sons of God : yet thee I thought
In some respect far higher so declar'd ;
Therefore I watch'd thy footsteps from that hour,
And follow'd thee still on to this waste wild ;
Where by all best conjectures I collect
Thou art to be my fatal enemy.
Good reason then, if I beforehand seek
To understand my adversary, who
And what he is ; his wisdom, power, intent ,
By parle, or composition, truce, or league,

To win him, or win from him what I can.
An opportunity I here have had
To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
Proof against all temptation, as a rock
Of adamant, and as a centre, firm :
To th' utmost of mere man both wise and good,
Nor more ; for honours, riches, kingdoms, glory,
Have been before contemn'd, and may again :
Therefore to know what more thou art than man,
Worth naming Son of God by voice from heaven,
Another method I must now begin.

So saying, he caught him up, and without wing
Of hippogriff, bore through the air sublime
Over the wilderness and o'er the plain ;
Till underneath them fair Jerusalem,
The holy city, lifted high her towers,
And higher yet the glorious temple rear'd
Her pile, far off appearing like a mount
Of alabaster, topp'd with golden spires :
There on the highest pinnacle he set
The Son of God, and added thus in scorn :

There stand, if thou wilt stand ; to stand upright
Will ask thee skill : I to thy father's house
Have brought thee, and highest plac'd ; highest is
best :

Now show thy progeny ; if not to stand,
Cast thyself down ; safely, if Son of God :
For it is written, He will give command
Concerning thee to his angels, in their hands
They shall uplift thee, lest at any time
Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone.

To whom thus Jesus : Also it is written,
Tempt not the Lord thy God : he said, and stood.
But Satan, smitten with amazement, fell :
As when earth's son Antæus (to compare
Small things with greatest) in Irassa strove
With Jove's Alcides, and oft foil'd still rose,
Receiving from his mother-earth new strength,
Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple join'd,

Throttled at length in th' air, expir'd and fell;
So after many a foil the Tempter proud,
Renewing fresh assaults, amidst his pride,
Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall.
And as that Theban monster, that propos'd
Her riddle, and him who solv'd it not devour'd,
That once found out and solv'd, for grief and spite
Cast herself headlong from th' Ismenian steep;
So, struck with dread and anguish fell the fiend;
And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought
Joyless triumphals of his hop'd success,
Ruin and desperation, and dismay,
Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God.
So Satan fell; and straight a fiery globe
Of angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
Who on their plummy vans receiv'd him soft
From his uneasy station, and upbore
As on a floating couch through the blithe air,
Then in a flowery valley set him down
On a green bank, and set before him spread
A table of celestial food, divine,
Ambrosial fruits, fetch'd from the tree of life,
And from the fount of life ambrosial drink,
That soon refresh'd him wearied, and repair'd,
What hunger, if aught hunger had impair'd,
Or thirst; and as he fed, angelic choirs
Sung heavenly anthems of his victory
Over temptation, and the Tempter proud.

True image of the Father, whether thron'd
In the bosom of bliss, and light of light
Conceiving, or remote from heaven, inshrin'd
In fleshly tabernacle, and human form,
Wand'ring the wilderness, whatever place,
Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing
The Son of God, with godlike force endu'd
Against th' attempter of thy Father's throne,
And thief of Paradise; him long of old
Thou didst defeat, and down from heaven cast
With all his army; now thou hast aveng'd

Supplanted Adam, and by vanquishing
Temptation hast regain'd lost Paradise,
And frustrated the conquest fraudulent;
He never more henceforth will dare set foot
In Paradise to tempt: his snares are broke:
For though that seat of earthly bliss be fail'd,
A fairer Paradise is founded now
For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou
A Saviour art come down to re-instal,
Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be,
Of tempter and temptation without fear.
But thou, infernal Serpent, shalt not long
Rule in the clouds; like an autumnal star
Or lightning thou shalt fall from heaven, trod down
Under his feet: for proof, ere this thou feel'st
Thy wound, yet not thy last and deadliest wound,
By this repulse receiv'd, and hold'st in hell
No triumph: in all her gates Abaddon rues
Thy bold attempt; hereafter learn with awe
To dread the Son of God: he, all unarm'd,
Shall chase thee with the terror of his voice
From thy demoniac holds, possession foul,
Thee and thy legions; yelling they shall fly,
And beg to hide them in a herd of swine,
Lest he command them down into the deep
Bound, and to torment sent before their time.
Hail Son of the Most High, heir of both worlds,
Queller of Satan, on thy glorious work
Now enter, and begin to save mankind.

Thus they the Son of God, our Saviour meek,
Sung victor, and from heavenly feast refresh'd,
Brought on his way with joy; he, unobserv'd,
Home to his mother's house private return'd.

END OF PARADISE REGAINED.

A MASK

PRESENTED

AT LUDLOW CASTLE,

BEFORE

THE EARL OF BRIDGEWATER,

THEN PRESIDENT OF WALES.

THE PERSONS.

The attendant SPIRIT, afterwards in the habit of Thyrsis.
COMUS with his crew.

The LADY.

First BROTHER.

Second BROTHER.

SABRINA the Nymph.

The chief persons who presented were,

The Lord BRACKLY.

Mr. THOMAS EGERTON his brother.

The Lady ALICE EGERTON.

1445

A MASK.*

The first scene discovers a wild wood.

The attendant Spirit descends or enters.

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aerial spirits live inspher'd
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
Which men call earth, and with low-thoughted care,
Confin'd and pester'd in this pin-fold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that virtue gives
After this mortal change to her true servants
Amongst the enthron'd gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there be that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key,
That opes the palace of eternity:
To such my errand is; and but for such,
would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.

* Milton seems in this poem to have imitated Shakspeare's manner in more than any other of his works; and it was very natural for a young author preparing a piece for the stage, to propose to himself for a pattern, the most celebrated master of English dramatic poetry. He has likewise very closely imitated several passages in Beaumont and Fletcher's play of *The Faithless Shepherdess*.

F*

But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove,
Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles,
That like to rich and various gems inlay
The unadorned bosom of the deep,
Which he to grace his tributary gods
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
And wield their little tridents : but this Isle,
The greatest and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities ;
And all this tract that fronts the falling sun
A noble peer of mickle trust and power
Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
An old and haughty nation, proud in arms :
Where his fair offspring nurs'd in princely lore
Are coming to attend their father's state,
And new-intrusted sceptre : but their way
Lies through the perplex'd paths of this drear wood,
The nodding horror of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wand'ring passenger ;
And here their tender age might suffer peril,
But that by quick command from sov'reign Jove
I was despatch'd for their defence and guard :
And listen why, for I will tell you now
What never yet was heard in tale or song,
From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crush'd the sweet poison of misused wine,
After the Tuscan mariners transform'd,
Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
On Circe's island fell : (Who knows not Circe
The daughter of the Sun ? whose charmed cup
Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a grovelling swine,)
This Nymph that gaz'd upon his clust'ring locks,
With ivy-berries wreath'd, and his blithe youth,

Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son,
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom, therefore, she brought up, and Comus nam'd;
Who ripe, and frolic of his full-grown age,
Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,
At last betakes him to this ominous wood,
And in thick shelter of black shades embower'd
Excels his mother at her mighty art,
Offering to every weary traveller,
His orient liquor in a crystal glass,
To quench the drouth of Phœbus, which as they taste,
(For most do taste, through fond intemp'rate thirst,)
Soon as the potion works, their human count'nance,
Th' express resemblance of the gods, is chang'd
Into some brutish form of wolf, or bear,
Or ounce, or tyger, hog, or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were;
And they, so perfect is their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely than before,
And all their friends and native home forget,
To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty;
Therefore when any favour'd of high Jove
Chances to pass through this advent'rous glade,
Swift as that sparkle of a glancing star
I shoot from heaven, to give him safe convoy,
As now I do: But first I must put off
These my sky robes spun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain,
That to the service of his house belongs,
Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
And hush the waving woods, nor of less faith,
And in this office of his mountain watch,
Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid
Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
Of hateful steps, I must be viewless now.

COMUS enters with a charming-rod in one hand, his glass in the other ; with him a rout of monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wilds beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel glistening ; they come in, making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.

Comus. The star that bids the shepherd fold,
Now the top of heaven doth hold,
And the gilded car of day,
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream,
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the east.
Meanwhile welcome joy, and feast,
Midnight shout, and revelry,
Tipsy dance, and jollity ;
Braid your locks with rosy twine,
Dropping odours, dropping wine.
Rigour now is gone to bed,
And Advice with scrupulous head,
Strict Age, and sour Severity
With their grave saws in slumber lie.
We that are of purer fire
Imitate the starry choir,
Who in their nightly watchful spheres,
Lead in swift round the months and years.
The sounds and seas with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move ;
And on the tawny sands and shelves
Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves.
By dimple brook, and fountain brim,
The wood-nymphs deck'd with daisies trim,
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep :
What hath night to do with sleep ?
Night hath better sweets to prove,
Venus now wakes and wakens Love.
Come let us our rites begin,
'Tis only day-light that makes sin,

Which these dull shades will ne'er report.
 Hail goddess of nocturnal sport,
 Dark-veil'd Cotytto, t' whom the secret flame
 Of midnight torches burns ; mysterious dame,
 That ne'er art call'd, but when the dragon womb
 Of Stygian darkness spits her thickest gloom,
 And makes one blot of all the air,
 Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
 Wherein thou rid'st with Hecate, and befriend
 Us, thy vow'd priests, till utmost end
 Of all thy dues be done, and none left out,
 Ere the blabbing eastern scout,
 The nice morn on th' Indian steep
 From her cabin'd loop-hole peep,
 And to the tell-tale sun descry
 Our conceal'd solemnity.
 Come, knit hands, and beat the ground
 In a light fantastic round.

The Measure.

Break off, break off, I feel the different pace
 Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
 Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees
 Our number may affright : Some virgin sure
 (For so I can distinguish by mine art)
 Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms,
 And to my wily trains ; I shall ere long
 Be well stock'd with as fair a herd as graz'd
 About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
 My dazzling spells into the spongy air,
 Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
 And give it false presentments, lest the place
 And my quaint habits, breed astonishment,
 And put the damsel to suspicious flight,
 Which must not be, for that's against my course ;
 I under fair pretence of friendly ends,
 And well plac'd words of glozing courtesy
 Baited with reasons not unplaussible,

Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
I shall appear some harmless villager,
Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
But here she comes, I fairly step aside,
And hearken, if I may, her business here.

The Lady enters.

This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
My best guide now ; methought it was the sound
Of riot and ill-manag'd merriment,
Such as the jocund flute, or gamesome pip
Stirs up among the loose unletter'd hinds,
When for their teeming flocks and granges full,
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan
And thank the gods amiss. I should be loath
To meet the rudeness, and swill'd insolence
Of such late wassailers ; yet O, where else
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood ?
My Brothers when they saw me wearied out
With this long way, resolving here to lodge
Under the spreading favour of these pines,
Stepp'd, as they said, to the next thicket side
To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
As the kind hospitable woods provide.
They left me then when the gray-hooded even,
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain.
But where they are, and why they came not back,
Is now the labour of my thoughts ; likeliest
They had engag'd their wand'ring steps too far,
And envious darkness, ere they could return,
Had stole them from me ; else, O thievish Night,
Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,
In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars,
That nature hung in heaven, and fill'd their lamps
With everlasting oil, to give due light

To the misled and lonely traveller?
 This is the place, as well as I may guess,
 Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
 Was rife, and perfect in my list'ning ear,
 Yet nought but single darkness do I find.
 What might this be? A thousand fantasies
 Begin to throng into my memory,
 Of calling shapes, and beck'ning shadows dire,
 And airy tongues, that syllable men's names
 On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.
 These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
 The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
 By a strong siding champion, Conscience.—
 O welcome pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope,
 Thou hovering angel girt with golden wings,
 And thou unblemish'd form of Chastity;
 I see you visibly, and now believe
 That he, the Supreme Good, t' whom all things ill
 Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
 Would send a glist'ring guardian if need were
 To keep my life and honour unassail'd.
 Was I deceiv'd, or did a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
 I did not err, there does a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
 And casts a gleam over this tufted grove.
 I cannot halloo to . . . Brothers, but
 Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
 I'll venture, for my new enliven'd spirits
 Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

SONG.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
 Within thy airy shell,
 By slow Meander's margent green,
 And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
 Where the lovelorn nightingale

Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well ;
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are ?
O if thou have
Hid them in some flowery cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parly, daughter of the sphere,
So mayst thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all heaven's harmonies.

Comus. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment ?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence :
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smil'd ! I have oft heard
My mother Circe with the Sirens three,
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades
Culling their potent herbs, and baleful drugs,
Who as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,
And lap in Elysium ; Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause :
Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense
And in sweet madness robb'd it of itself :
But such a sacred, and homefelt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss
I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,
And she shall be my queen. Hail, foreign wonder,
Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
Unless the goddess that in rural shrine
Dwell'st here with Pan, or Silvan by bless'd song
Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
To touch the prosp'rous growth of this tall wood.
Lady. Nay, gentle Shepherd, ill is lost that praise
That is address'd to unattending ears ;

Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
 How to regain my sever'd company,
 Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo
 To give me answer from her mossy couch.

Com. What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you
 thus?

Lady. Dim darkness and this leafy labyrinth.

Com. Could that divide you from near-ushering
 guides?

Lady. They left me weary on a grassy turf.

Com. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?

Lady. To seek i' th' valley some cool friendly spring.

Com. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?

Lady. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick
 return.

Com. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them?

Lady. How easy my misfortune is to hit!

Com. Imports their loss, beside the present need?

Lady. No less than if I should my brothers lose.

Com. Where they of manly prime, or youthful
 bloom?

Lady. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.

Com. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox
 In his loose traces from the furrow came,
 And the swink'd hedger at his supper sat;
 I saw them under a green mantling vine
 That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
 Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;
 Their port was more than human, as they stood;
 I took it for a fairy vision
 Of some gay creatures of the element,
 That in the colours of the rainbow live,
 And play i' th' plighted clouds. I was awe-struck.
 And as I pass'd, I worshipp'd; if those you seek,
 It were a journey like the path to heaven,
 To help you find them.

Lady. Gentle villager,
 What readiest way would bring me to that place?

Com. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.

Lady. To find out that, good Shepherd, I suppose,
In such a scant allowance of star-light,
Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,
Without the sure guess of well-practis'd feet.

Com. I know each lane, and every alley green,
Dingle or bushy dell of this wild wood,
And every busky bourn from side to side,
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood ;
And if your stray-attendants be yet lodg'd,
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
From her thatch'd pallet rouse ; if otherwise
I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till further quest.

Lady. Shepherd I take thy word,
And trust thy honest offer'd courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
With smoky rafters, than in tap'stry halls
And courts of princes, where it first was nam'd,
And yet is most pretended : In a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.
Eye me, bless'd Providence, and square my trial
To my proportion'd strength. Shepherd, lead on.

The two Brothers.

Eld. Bro. Unmuffle, ye faint stars, and thou, fair
moon,
That wont'st to love the traveller's benizon,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness, and of shades ;
Or if your influence be quite damm'd up
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
Though a rush candle from the wicker hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long levell'd rule of streaming light,

And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

Sec. Bro. Or if our eyes
Be barr'd that happiness, might we but hear
The folded flocks penn'd in their wattled cotes,
Or sound of past'ral reed with oaten stops,
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
Count the night watches to his feathery dames,
'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering
In this close dungeon of innumerable boughs.
But O that hapless virgin, our lost Sister,
Where may she wander now, whither betake her
From the chill dew, amongst rude burs and thistles ?
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
Leans her unpillow'd head fraught with sad fears.
What if in wild amazement, and affright,
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat ?

Eld. Bro. Peace, Brother, be not over exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils ;
For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
What need a man forestall his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid ?
Or if they be but false alarms of fear,
How bitter is such self-delusion ?
I do not think my Sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in virtue's book,
And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
As that the single want of light and noise
Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into misbecoming plight.
Virtue could see to do what virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk. And wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,
Where with her best nurse contemplation
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,

That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd.
He that has light within his own clear breast
May sit i' th' centre, and enjoy bright day :
But he that hides a dark soul, and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun ;
Himself is his own dungeon.

Sec. Bro. 'Tis most true,
That musing meditation most affects
The pensive secresy of desert cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
And sits as safe as in the senate house ;
For who would rob a hermet of his weeds,
His few books or his beads, or maple dish,
Or do his grey hairs any violence ?
But beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon-watch with unenchanted eye,
To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit
From the rash hand of bold incontinence.
You may as well spread out the unsunn'd heaps
Of miser's treasure by an outlaw's den,
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on opportunity,
And let a single helpless maiden pass
Uninjur'd in this wild surrounding waste.
Of night, or loneliness it recks me not ;
I fear the dread events that dog them both,
Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
Of our unown'd Sister.

Eld. Bro. I do not, Brother,
Infer, as if I thought my Sister's state
Secure without all doubt, or controversy .
Yet where an equal poise of hope and fear
Does arbitrate th' event, my nature is
That I incline to hope, rather than fear,
And gladly banish squint suspicion.
My Sister is not so defenceless left

As you imagine ; she has a hidden strength
Which you remember not,

Sec. Bro. What hidden strength,
Unless the strength of heaven, if you mean that ?

Eld. Bro. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength
Which if heaven gave it, may be term'd her own,
'Tis chastity, my Brother, chastity :

She that has that, is clad in complete steel,
And like a quiver'd nymph with arrows keen
May trace huge forests, and unharbour'd heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds,
Where through the sacred rays of chastity,
No savage fierce, bandit, or mountaineer
Will dare to soil her virgin purity :

Yea there, where very desolation dwells
By grots, and caverns shagg'd with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblench'd majesty,
Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.

Some say no evil thing that walks by night,
In fog, or fire, by lake, or moorish fen,
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost,
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
No goblin, or swart fairy of the mine,
Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.

Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the arms of chastity ?

Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste,
Wherewith she tam'd the brinded lioness
And spotted mountain pard, but set at nought
The frivolous bolt of Cupid ; gods and men
Fear'd her stern frown, and she was queen o' th' woods
What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield,
That wise Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin,
Wherewith she freez'd her foes to congeal'd stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity,
And noble grace that dash'd brute violence
With sudden adoration, and blank awe ?

So dear to heaven is saintly chastity,
 That when a soul is found sincerely so,
 A thousand liveried angels lacky her,
 Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,
 And in clear dream, and solemn vision,
 Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear,
 Till oft converse with heavenly habitants,
 Begin to cast a beam on th' outward shape,
 The unpolluted temple of the mind,
 And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
 Till all be made immortal: but when lust,
 By unchaste looks, loose gestures and foul talk,
 But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
 Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
 The soul grows clotted by contagion,
 Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
 The divine property of her first being.
 Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp
 Oft seen in charnal vaults and sepulchres,
 Ling'ring and sitting by a new made grave,
 As loath to leave the body that it lov'd,
 And link'd itself by carnal sensuality
 To a degenerate and degraded state.

Sec. Bro. How charming is divine philosophy !
 Not harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
 But musical as is Apollo's lute,
 And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
 Where no crude surfeit reigns.

Eld. Bro. List, list, I hear
 Some far off halloo break the silent air.

Sec. Bro. Methought so too ; what should it be.

Eld. Bro. For certain
 Either some one like us night-founder'd here,
 Or else some neighbour wood-man, or at worst,
 Some roving robber calling to his fellows.

Sec. Bro. Heaven keep my Sister. Again, again,
 and near ;
 Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

Eld. Bro. I'll halloo ;

If he be friendly, he comes well ; If not,
Defence is a good cause, and heaven be for us.

The attendant Spirit, habited like a shepherd.

That halloo I should know, what are you ? speak ;
Come not too near, you fall on iron stakes else.

Spir. What voice is that ? my young lord ? speak
again.

Sec. Bro. O brother, 'tis my father's shepherd, sure.

Eld. Bro. Thyrsis ? whose artful strains have oft
delay'd

The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
And sweeten'd every musk-rose of the dale.
How cam'st thou here, good swain ? hath any ram
Slipp'd from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook ?
How could'st thou find this dark sequester'd nook ?

Spir. O my lov'd master's heir, and his next joy,
I came not here on such a trivial toy
As a stray'd ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolf ; not all the fleecy wealth
That doth enrich these downs, is worth a thought
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But, O my virgin Lady, where is she ?
How chance she is not in your company ?

Eld. Bro. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, without
blame,

Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.

Spir. Ah me unhappy ! then my fears are true.

Eld. Bro. What fears, good Thyrsis ? Prithee
briefly show.

Spir. I'll tell ye ; 'tis not vain or fabulous,
Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance,)
What the sage poets, taught by th' heavenly muse.
Storied of old in high immortal verse,
Of dire chimeras and enchanted isles,
And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to hell ;
For such there be, but unbelief is blind.

Within the naval of this hideous wood,
Immur'd in cypress shades a sorcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries,
And here to every thirsty wanderer,
By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,
With many mumurs mix'd, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
Character'd in the face ; this have I learn'd
Tending my flocks hard by i' th' hilly crofts
That brow this bottom glade, whence night by night
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl
Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhored rites to Hecate
In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers.
Yet have they many baits, and guileful spells,
To inveigle and invite th' unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb
Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honey-suckle, and began,
Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
Till fancy had her fill, but ere a close
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
And fill'd the air with barbarous dissonance ;
At which I ceas'd, and listen'd them awhile,
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite to the drowsy-flighted steeds,
That draw the litter of close curtain'd sleep ;
At last a soft and solemn breathing-sound
Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even silence
Was took ere she was 'ware, and wished she might

Deny her nature, and be never more
 Still to be so displac'd. I was all ear,
 And took in strains that might create a soul
 Under the ribs of death: but Oh! ere long
 Too well I did perceive it was the voice
 Of my most honour'd Lady, your dear sister,
 Amaz'd I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear,
 And O, poor hapless nightingale, thought I,
 How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!
 Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
 Through paths and turnings often trod by day;
 Till guided by mine ear I found the place,
 Where that damn'd wizzard hid in sly disguise
 (For so by certain signs I knew) had met
 Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
 The aidless innocent Lady, his wish'd prey,
 Who gently ask'd if he had seen such two,
 Supposing him some neighbour villager.
 Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guess'd
 Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
 Into swift flight, till I had found you here.
 But further know I not.

Sec. Bro. O night and shades,
 How are ye join'd with hell in triple knot,
 Against th' unarmed weakness of one virgin,
 Alone, and helpless! Is this the confidence
 You gave me, Brother?

Eld. Bro. Yes, and keep it still,
 Lean on it safely; not a period
 Shall be unsaid for me: against the threats
 Of malice or of sorcery, or that power
 Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm,
 Virtue may be assail'd, but never hurt
 urpris'd by unjust force, but not inthrall'd;
 Yea even that which mischief meant most harm,
 Shall in the happy trial prove most glory;
 But evil on itself shall back recoil,
 And mix no more with goodness, when at last
 Gather'd like scum, and settled to itself,

It shall be in eternal restless change
Self-fed, and self-consumed : if this fail,
The pillar'd firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble. But come, let's on.
Against th' opposing will and arm of heaven
May never this just sword be lifted up ;
But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt
With all the grisly legions that troop
Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms
'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
And force him to restore his purchase back,
Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
Curs'd as his life.

Spir. Alas ! good vent'rous youth,
I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise ;
But here thy sword can do thee little stead ;
Far other arms, and other weapons must
Be those that quell the might of hellish charms :
He, with his bare wand, can unthread thy joints,
And crumble all thy sinews.

Eld. Bro. Why pr'ythee, Shepherd,
How durst thou then thyself approach so near,
As to make this relation ?

Spir. Care and utmost shifts
How to secure the Lady from surprisal,
Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd
In every virtuous plant and healing herb,
That spreads her verdant leaf to th' morning ray :
He lov'd me well, and oft would beg me sing,
Which when I did, he, on the tender grass,
Would sit and hearken e'en to ecstasy,
And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
And show me simples of a thousand names,
Telling their strange and vigorous faculties :
Among the rest a small unsightly root,
But of divine effect, he cull'd me out ;
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,

But in another country, as he said,
 Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil :
 Unknown, and like esteem'd, and the dull swain
 Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon ;
 And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly
 That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave :
 He call'd it Hæmony, and gave it me,
 And bade me keep it as of sov'reign use
 'Gainst all enchantments, mildew, blast, or damp,
 Or ghastly furies' apparition.
 I purs'd it up, but little reck'ning made,
 Till now that this extremity compell'd.
 But now I find it true ; for by this means
 I knew the foul enchanter though disguis'd,
 Enter'd the very lime-twigs of his spells,
 And yet came off : if you have this about you,
 (As I will give you when we go,) you may
 Boldly assault the necromancer's hall ;
 Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood,
 And brandish'd blade rush on him, break his glass,
 And shed the luscious liquor on the ground,
 But seize his wand ; though he and his curs'd crew
 Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
 Or, like the sons of Vulcan, vomit smoke,
 Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink,

Eld. Bro. Thyrsis, lead on a pace, I'll follow thee,
 And some good angel bear a shield before us,

The scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness : soft music, tables spread with all dainties. COMUS appears with his rabble, and the LADY set in an enchanted chair, to whom he offers his glass, which she puts by, and attempts to rise.

Com. Nay, Lady, sit ; if I but wave this wand,
 Your nerves are all chain'd up in alabaster,
 And you a statue, or as Daphne was
 Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

Lady. Fool, do not boast,
 Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind

With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled, while heaven sees good.

Com. Why are you vex'd, Lady? Why do ye
frown?

Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far: See here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose-season.
And first behold this cordial julap here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm, and fragrant syrups mix'd.
Not that *Nepenthes*, which the wife of *Thone*
In *Egypt* gave to *Jove-born Helena*,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst,
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs which nature lent
For gentle usage, and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
With that which you receiv'd on other terms,
Scorning the unexempt condition
By which all mortal frailty may subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tir'd all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted; but, fair virgin,
This will restore all soon.

Lady. 'Twill not, false traitor,
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage, and the safe abode
Thou told'st me of? what grim aspects are these,
These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
Hence with thy brew'd enchantments, foul deceiver;
Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence
With visor'd falsehood, and base forgery?
And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here
With liquorish baits fit to ensnare a brute?

Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
I would not taste thy treasonous offer ; none
But such as are good men can give good things,
And that which is not good is not delicious
To a well-govern'd and wise appetite.

Com. O foolishness of men ! that lend their ears
To those budge doctors of the stoic fur,
And fetch their precepts from the cynic tub,
Praising the lean and sallow abstinence.
Wherefore did nature pour her bounties forth,
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please and sate the curious taste ?
And set to work millions of spinning worms,
That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd
silk,

To deck her sons ; and that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hutch'd th' all worshipp'd ore, and precious gems
To store her children with ; if all the world
Should in a pet of temp'rance feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
Th' all-giver would be unthank'd, would be unprais'd
Not half his riches known, and yet despis'd,
And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth,
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own weight,
And strangled with her waste fertility,
Th' earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air dark'd with
plumes,

The herds would over-multitude their lords,
The sea o'erfraught would swell, and th' unsought
diamonds

Would so emblaze the forehead of the deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below
Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows

List, Lady, be not coy, and be not cozen'd
With that same vaunted name virginity.
Beauty is nature's coin, must not be hoarded
But must be current, and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavoury in th' enjoyment of itself;
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languish'd head.
Beauty is nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, in feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship;
It is for homely features to keep home,
They had their name thence; coarse complexions
And cheeks of sorry grain will serve to ply
The sampler, and to tease the housewife's wool.
What need a vermil-tinctur'd lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
There was another meaning in these gifts,
Think what, and be advis'd, you are but young yet.

Lady. I had not thought to have unlock'd my lips
In this unhallow'd air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules prank'd in reason's garb.
I hate when vice can bolt her arguments,
And virtue has no tongue to check her pride.
Imposter, do not charge most innocent nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous
With her abundance; she, good cateress,
Means her provision only to the good,
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare temperance:
If every just man, that now pines with want,
Had but a moderate and beseeeming share
Of that which lewdly pamper'd luxury
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
Nature's full blessing would be well dispens'd
In unsuperfluous even proportion,
And she no whit incumber'd with her store;
And then the giver would be better thank'd,

His praise due paid ; for swinish gluttony
Ne'er looks to heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with besotted base ingratitude
Crams and blasphemes his feeder. Shall I go on ?
Or have I said enough ? To him that dares
Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
Against the sun-clad power of chastity,
Fain would I something say, yet to what end ?
Thou hast not ear nor soul to apprehend
The sublime notion, and high mystery,
That must be utter'd to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of virginity,
And thou art worthy that thou should'st not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.
Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence,
Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinc'd ;
Yet should I try, the uncontrolled worth
Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence,
That dumb things would be mov'd to sympathize,
And the brute earth would lend her nerves and shake,
Till all thy magic structures rear'd so high,
Were shatter'd into heaps o'er thy false head.
Com. She fables not, I feel that I do fear
Her words set off by some superior power :
And though not mortal, yet a cold shudd'ring dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus
To some of Satan's crew. I must dissemble,
And try her yet more strongly. Come, no more,
This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon laws of our foundation ;
I must not suffer this, yet 'tis but the lees
And settlings of a melancholy blood :
But this will cure all straight, one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits, and delight
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.

The Brothers rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground ; his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in : The attendant Spirit comes in.

Spirit. What, have you let the false enchanter
'scape ?

O ye mistook, ye should have snatch'd his wand
And bound him fast ; without his rod revers'd,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fixed, and motionless :
Yet stay, be not disturb'd ; now I bethink me,
Some other means I have which may be us'd,
Which once of Melibæus old I learn'd,
The soothest shepherd that e'er pip'd on plains.

There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn
stream,

Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure ,
Whilome she was the daughter of Lochrine,
That had the sceptre from his father Brute.
She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit
Of her enraged stepdame Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
That stay'd her flight with his cross flowing course,
The water-nymphs that in the bottom play'd,
Held up their pearly wrists and took her in,
Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall,
Who, piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to embathe
In nectar'd lavers strow'd with asphodil.
And through the porch and inlet of each sense
Dropp'd in ambrosial oils till she reviv'd,
And underwent a quick immortal change,
Made goddess of the river ; still she retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs
That the shrew'd meddling elf delights to make,

Which she with precious vial'd liquors heals.
For which the shepherds at their festivals
Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream,
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.
And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,
If she be right invok'd in warbled song,
For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
In hard besetting need ; this will I try,
And add the power of some adjuring verse.

SONG.

Sabrina fair,
 Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
 In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair ;
 Listen for dear honour's sake,
 Goddess of the silver lake,
 Listen and save.
Listen and appear to us
In name of great Oceanus,
By th' earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethy's grave majestic pace,
By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wizard's hook,
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old sooth-saying Glaucus' spell,
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands,
By Thetis' tinsel-slipper'd feet,
And the songs of Sirens sweet,
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,

H*

Sleeping her soft alluring locks,
By all the nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answer'd have.
Listen and save.

Sabrina rises, attended by water-nymphs, and sings.

By the rushy-fringed bank,
Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate, and the azure sheen
Of turkis blue, and em'rald green
That in the channel strays ;
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread ;
Gentle Swain, at thy request
I am here.

Spirit. Goddess dear,
We implore thy powerful hand
To undo the charmed band
Of true virgin here distress'd,
Through the force, and through the wile
Of unblest'd enchanter vile.

Sab. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help ensnar'd chastity :
Brightest Lady, look on me ;
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops that from my fountain pure
I have kept of precious cure,
Thrice upon thy finger's tip
Thrice upon thy rubied lip ;
Next this marble venom'd seat,

Smear'd with gums of glutinous heat,
I touch with chaste palms moist and cold :
Now the spell hath lost his hold ;
And I must haste ere morning hour
To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

Sabrina descends, and the Lady rises out of her seat.

Spirit. Virgin, daughter of Locrine
Sprung of old Anchises' line
May thy brimmed waves for this
Their full tribute never miss
From a thousand petty rills,
That tumble down the snowy hills :
Summer drouth, or singed air
Never scorch thy tresses fair,
Nor wet October's torrent flood
Thy molten chrystal fill with mud :
May thy billows roll ashore
The beryl, and the golden ore ;
May thy lofty head be crown'd
With many a tower and terrace round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrh and cinnamon.

Come, Lady, while heaven lends us grace,
Let us fly this cursed place,
Lest the sorcerer us entice
With some other new device.
Not a waste, or needless sound,
Till we come to holier ground ;
I shall be your faithful guide
Through this gloomy covert wide,
And not many furlongs thence
Is your Father's residence,
Where this night are met in state
Many a friend to gratulate
His wish'd presence, and beside
All the swains that near abide,
With jigs, and rural dance resort ;

We shall catch them at their sport,
 And our sudden coming there
 Will double all their mirth and cheer ;
 Come, let us haste, the stars grow high,
 But night sits monarch yet in the mid-sky.

The scene changes, presenting Ludlow town and the President's castle ; then come in country dancers, after them the attendant Spirit, with the two Brothers and the Lady.

SONG.

Spi. Back, Shepherds, back, enough your play,
 Till next sun-shine holiday :
 Here be without duck or nod
 Other trappings to be trod
 Of lighter toes, and such court guise
 As Mercury did first devise
 With the mincing Dryades
 On the lawns, and on the leas.

This second Song presents them to their Father and Mother.

Noble Lord and Lady bright,
 I have brought you new delight,
 Here behold so goodly grown
 Three fair branches of your own ;
 Heaven hath timely tried their youth,
 Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
 And sent them here through hard assays
 With a crown of deathless praise,
 To triumph in victorious dance
 O'er sensual folly, and intemperance.

The dances ended, the Spirit epilogizies.

Spir. To the ocean now I fly,
 And those happy climes that lie
 Where day never shuts his eye,

Up in the broad fields of the sky :
There I suck the liquid air
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree.
Along the crisped shades and bowers
Revils the spruce and jocund Spring,
The Graces, and the rosy bosom'd Hours.
Thither all their bounties bring ;
That there eternal summer dwells
And west-winds with musky wing
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard and Cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purpled scarf can show.
And drenches with Elysian dew
(List mortals, if your ears be true)
Beds of hyacinth and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound
In slumber soft, and on the ground
Sadly sits th' Assyrian queen ;
But far above in spangled sheen
Celestial Cupid her fam'd son advanc'd,
Holds his dear Psyche sweet intranc'd,
After her wand'ring labours long
Till free consent the gods among
Make her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born.
Youth and Joy ; so Jove hath sworn.
But now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend,
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.

Mortals that would follow me,
Love virtue, she alone is free.
She can teach you how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime ;
Or if virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

END OF THE MASK.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

THE PERSONS.

SAMSON.

MANOAH, the Father of Samson.

DALILA, his Wife.

HARAPHA of Gath.

Public Officer.

Messenger.

Chorus of Danites.

THE ARGUMENT.

Samson made captive, blind, and now in the prison at Gaza, there to labour as in a common work-house, on a festival day, in the general cessation from labour, comes forth into the open air, to a place nigh, some-what retired, there to sit awhile and bemoan his condition. Where he happens at length to be visited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who seek to comfort him what they can; then by his old father Manoah, who endeavors the like, and withal tells him his purpose to procure his liberty by ransom; lastly, that this feast was proclaimed by the Philistines as a day of thanksgiving for their deliverance from the hands of Samson, which yet more troubles him. Manoah then departs to prosecute his endeavour with the Philistian lords for Samson's redemption; who, in the meanwhile, is visited by other persons; and lastly by a public officer to require his coming to the feast before the lords and people, to play and show his strength in their presence; he at first refuses, dismissing the public officer with absolute denial to come; at length, persuaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the second time with great threatenings to fetch him; the Chorus yet remaining on the place, Manoah returns full of joyful hope, to procure ere long his son's deliverance: in the midst of which discourse a Hebrew comes in haste, confusedly at first, and afterwards more distinctly relating the catastrophe, what Samson had done to the Philistines, and by accident to himself; wherewith the tragedy ends.

SAMSON AGONISTES.*

The Scene before the Prison in Gaza.

Samson.

A LITTLE onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little farther on ;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade,
There I am wont to sit, when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else injoin'd me,
Where I a prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw
The air imprison'd also, close and damp,
Unwholesome draught : but here I feel amends,
The breath of heaven fresh blowing, pure and sweet,
With day-spring born ; here leave me to respire.
This day a solemn feast the people hold
To Dagon, their sea-idol, and forbid
Laborious works ; unwillingly this rest
Their superstition yields me ; hence with leave
Retiring from the popular noise, I seek
This unfrequented place to find some ease,
Ease to the body some, none to the mind

* *Samson Agonistes*, that is, *Samson an Actor*, *Samson* represented in a play.

From restless thoughts that like a deadly swarm
Of hornets arm'd, no sooner found alone,
But rush upon me thronging, and present
Times past, what once I was, and what am now
O wherefore was my birth from heaven foretold
Twice by an angel, who at last in sight
Of both my parents all in flames ascended
From off the altar, where an offering burn'd,
As in a fiery column charioting
His godlike presence, and from some great act
Or benefit reveal'd to Abraham's race?
Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd
As of a person separate to God,
Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out,
Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze;
To grind in brazen fetters under task
With this heaven-gifted strength? O glorious
strength

Put to the labour of a beast, debas'd
Lower than bondslave! Promise was that I
Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver:
Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him
Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves,
Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke;
Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt
Divine prediction; what if all foretold
Had been fulfill'd but through mine own default
Whom have I to complain of but myself?
Who this high gift of strength committed to me,
In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,
Under the seal of silence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman must reveal it,
O'ercome with importunity and tears.
O impotence of mind, in body strong!
But what is strength without a double share
Of wisdom, vast, unwieldy, burdensome,
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall
By weakest subtleties, not made to rule,

But to subserve where wisdom bears command !
God, when he gave me strength, to show withal
How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.
But peace, I must not quarrel with the will
Of highest dispensation, which herein
Haply had ends above my reach to know :
Suffices that to me strength is my bane,
And proves the source of all my miseries ;
So many, and so huge, that each apart
Would ask a life to wail, but chief of all,
O loss of sight, of thee I most complain !
Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,
Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepid age !
Light, the prime work of God to me is extinct,
And all her various objects of delight
Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,
Inferior to the vilest now become
Of man or worm ; the vilest here excel me,
They creep, yet see, I dark in light expos'd
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
Within doors, or without, still as a fool,
In power of others, never in my own ;
Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse
Without all hope of day !
O first created Beam, and thou great Word,
Let there be light, and light was over all ;
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree ?
The sun to me is dark
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night
Lid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since light so necessary is to life,
And almost life itself, if it be true
That light is in the soul,
She all in every part ; why was the sight
To such a tender ball as th' eye confin'd,
So obvious and so easy to be quench'd ?

And not as feeling through all parts diffus'd,
That she might look at will through every pore ?
Then had I not been thus exil'd from light,
As in the land of darkness yet in light ;
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And buried ; but O yet more miserable !
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave,
Buried, yet not exempt
By privilege of death and burial
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs,
But made hereby obnoxious more
To all the miseries of life,
Life in captivity
Among inhuman foes.

But who are these ? for with joint pace I hear
The tread of many feet steering this way ;
Perhaps my enemies who come to stare
At my affliction, and perhaps t' insult,
Their daily practice to afflict me more.

Chor. This, this is he ; softly awhile !
Let us not break in upon him :
O change beyond report, thought, or belief !
See how he lies at random, carelessly diffus'd,
With languish'd head unpropp'd,
As one past hope, abandon'd,
And by himself given over ;
In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds
O'er-worn and soil'd ;
Or do my eyes misrepresent ? Can this be he,
That heroic, that renown'd,
Irresistible Samson ? whom unarm'd
No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast could with-
stand ;

Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid,
Ran on imbattled armies clad in iron,
And weaponless himself
Made arms ridiculous, useless the forgery
Of brazen shield and spear, the hammer'd cuirass
Chalybean temper'd steel, and frock of mail

Adamantean proof ;
 But safest he who stood aloof,
 When insupportably his foot advanc'd,
 In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,
 Spurn'd them to death by troops. The bold Asca-
 lonite

Fled from his lion ramp, old warriors turn'd
 Their plated backs under his heel ;
 Or grov'ling soil'd their crested helmets in the dust,
 Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,
 The jaw of a dead ass, his sword of bone,
 A thousand foreskins fell, the flower of Palestine,
 In Ramath-lechi famous to this day.
 Then by main force pull'd up, and on his shoulders
 bore

The gates of Azza, post, and massy bar,
 Up to the hill by Hebron, seat of giants old,
 No journey of a Sabbath-day, and loaded so ;
 Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up heaven.
 Which shall I first bewail.

Thy bondage or lost sight,
 Prison within prison
 Inseparably dark ?

Thou art become (O worst imprisonment !)
 The dungeon of thyself ; thy soul
 (Which men enjoying sight oft without cause com-
 plain)

Imprison'd now indeed,
 In real darkness of the body dwells,
 Shut up from outward light
 T' incorporate with gloomy night,
 For inward light, alas !
 Puts forth no visual beam.

O mirror of our fickle state,
 Since man on earth uparallel'd !
 The rarer thy example stands,
 By how much from the top of wond'rous glory,
 Strongest of mortal men,
 To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fallen,

For him I reckon not in high estate
 Whom long descent of birth
 Or the sphere of fortune raises ;
 But thee whose strength, while virtue was her mate,
 Might have subdued the earth,
 Universally crown'd with highest praises.

Sams. I hear the sound of words, their sense the air
 Dissolves unjointed ere it reach my ear.

Chor. He speaks, let us draw nigh. Matchless in
 might,

The glory late of Israel, now the grief ;
 We come thy friends and neighbours not unknown
 From Eshtaol and Zora's fruitful vale,
 To visit or bewail thee, or if better,
 Counsel or consolation we may bring,
 Salve to thy sores ; apt words have power to 'swage
 The tumours of a troubled mind,
 And are as balm to fester'd wounds.

Sams. Your coming, friends, revives me, for I
 learn

Now of my own experience, not by talk,
 How counterfeit a coin they are who friends
 Bear in their superscription, (of the most
 I would be understood,) in prosp'rous days
 They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head,
 Not to be found though sought. Ye see, O friends,
 How many evils have enclos'd me round ;
 Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me,
 Blindness, for had I sight, confus'd with shame,
 How could I once look up, or heave the head,
 Who like a foolish pilot have shipwreck'd
 My vessel trusted to me from above,
 Gloriously rigg'd ; and for a word, a tear,
 Fool, have divulg'd the secret gift of God
 To a deceitful woman ? tell me friends,
 Am I not sung and proverb'd for a fool
 In every street ? do they not say, how well
 Are come upon him his deserts ? yet why ?
 Immeasurable strength they might behold

In me, of wisdom nothing more than mean ;
This with the other should, at least, have pair'd,
These two, proportion'd ill, drove me transverse.

Chor. Tax not divine disposal ; wisest men
Have err'd, and by bad women been deceiv'd ;
And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise.
Deject not then so overmuch thyself,
Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides ;
Yet truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder
Why thou shouldst wed Philistian women rather
Than of thy own tribe fairer, or as fair,
At least of thy own nation, and as noble.

Sams. The first I saw at Timna, and she pleas'd
Me, not my parents, that I sought to wed
The daughter of an infidel ; they knew not
That what I motion'd was of God ; I knew
From intimate impulse, and therefore urg'd
The marriage on ; that by occasion hence
I might begin Israel's deliverance,
The work to which I was divinely call'd.
She proving false, the next I took to wife
(O that I never had ! fond wish too late,)
Was in the vale of Sorec, Dalila,
That specious monster, my accomplish'd snare.
I thought it lawful from my former act,
And the same end : still watching to oppress
Israel's oppressors : of what now I suffer
She was not the prime cause but I myself,
Who vanquish'd with a peal of words (O weakness !)
Gave up my fort of silence to a woman.

Chor. In seeking just occasion to provoke
The Philistine, thy country's enemy,
Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness :
Yet Israel still serves with all his sons.

Sams. That fault I take not on me, but transfer
On Israel's governors, and heads of tribes,
Who seeing those great acts, which God had done
Singly by me against their conqueror,
Acknowledg'd not, or not at all consider'd

Deliverance offer'd: I on the other side
Us'd no ambition to commend my deeds,
The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the
doer;

But they persisted deaf and would not seem
To count them things worth notice, till at length
Their lords the Philistines with gather'd powers
Enter'd Judea seeking me, who then
Safe to the rock of Etham was retir'd,
Not flying, but fore-casting in what place
To set upon them, what advantag'd best:
Meanwhile the men of Judah, to prevent
The harass of their land, beset me round;
I willingly on some conditions came
Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me
To the uncircumcised a welcome prey,
Bound with two cords: but cords to me were threads
Touch'd with the flame; on their whole host I flew
Unarm'd, and with a trivial weapon fell'd
Their choicest youth; they only liv'd who fled.
Had Judah that day join'd, or one whole tribe,
'They had by this possess'd the towers of Gath,
And lorded over them whom now they serve;
But what more oft in nations grown corrupt
And by their vices brought to servitude,
Than to love bondage more than liberty,
Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty;
And to despise, or envy, or suspect
Whom God hath of his special favour rais'd
As their deliverer; if he aught begin,
How frequent to desert him, and at last
To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds?

Chor. Thy words to my remembrance bring
How Succoth and the fort of Penuel
Their great deliverer contemn'd,
The matchless Gideon in pursuit
Of Madian and her vanquish'd kings:
And how ingrateful Ephraim
Had dealt with Jephtha, who by argument,

Not worse than by his shield and spear,
Defended Israel from the Ammonite
Had not his prowess quell'd their pride
In that sore battle, when so many died
Without reprieve adjudg'd to death,
For want of well pronouncing Shibboleth.

Sams. Of such examples add me to the roll.
Me easily indeed mine may neglect,
But God's propos'd deliverance not so.

Chor. Just are the ways of God,
And justifiable to men :
Unless there be who think not God at all ;
If any be, they walk obscure ;
For of such doctrine never was there school,
But the heart of the fool,
And no man therein doctor but himself.
Yet more there be who doubt his ways not just,
As to his own edicts found contradicting,
Then give the reins to wand'ring thought,
Regardless of his glory's diminution ;
Till by their own perplexities involv'd
They ravel more, still less resolv'd,
But never find self-satisfying solution.

As if they would confine th' Interminable,
And tie him to his own prescript,
Who made our laws to bind us, not himself,
And hath full right t' exempt
Whom so it pleases him by choice
From national obstruction, without taint
Of sin or legal debt :
For with his own laws he can best dispense.

He would not else who never wanted means,
Nor in respect of th' enemy just cause
To set his people free,
Have prompted this heroic Nazarite,
Against his vow of strictest purity,
To seek in marriage that falacious bride,
Unclean, unchaste.

Down reason then, at least vain reasonings down,

Though reason here aver
That moral verdict quits her of unclean ;
Unchaste was subsequent, her stain not his.

But see here comes thy reverend sire
With careful steps, locks white as down,
Old Manoah : advise
Forthwith how thou ought'st to receive him.

Sams. Ah me, another inward grief awak'd
With mention of that name renews th' assault.

Man. Brethren and men of Dan, for such ye seem,
Though in this uncouth place : if old respect
As I suppose, towards your once gloried friend,
My son now captive, hither hath inform'd
Your younger feet, while mine cast back with age
Came lagging after ; say if he be here.

Chor. As signal now in low dejected state,
As erst in highest, behold him where he lies.

Man. O miserable change ! is this the man,
That invincible Sampson, far renown'd,
The dread of Israel's foes, who with a strength
Equivalent to angels walk'd their streets,
None offering fight ; who single combatant
Duell'd their armies rank'd in proud array,
Himself an army, now unequal match
To save himself against a coward arm'd
At one spear's length. O ever failing trust
In mortal strength ! and oh what not in man
Deceivable and vain ! Nay what thing good
Pray'd for, but often proves our wo, our bane ?
I pray'd for children, and thought barrenness
In wedlock a reproach ; I gain'd a son,
And such a son as all men hail'd me happy :
Who would be now a father in my stead ?
O wherefore did God grant me my request,
And as a blessing with such pomp adorn'd ?
Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt
Our earnest prayers, then given with solemn hand
As graces draw a scorpion's tail behind ?
For this did th' angels twice descend ? for this

Ordain'd thy nurture holy, as of a plant
 Select, and sacred, glorious for awhile
 The miracle of men ; then in an hour
 Insnar'd, assaulted, overcome, led bound,
 Thy foes' derision, captive, poor, and blind,
 Into a dungeon thrust, to work with slaves ?
 Alas ! methinks whom God hath chosen once
 To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err,
 He should not so o'erwhelm, as a thrall
 Subject him to such foul indignities,
 Be it but for honour's sake of former deeds.

Sams. Appoint not heavenly disposition, father ;
 Nothing of all these evils hath befallen me
 But justly ; I myself have brought them on,
 Sole author I, sole cause ; if aught seem vile,
 As vile hath been my folly, who have profan'd
 The mystery of God given me under pledge
 Of vow, and have betray'd it to a woman,
 A Canaanite, my faithless enemy.
 This well I knew, nor was at all surpris'd,
 But warn'd by oft experience ; did not she
 Of Timna first betray me, and reveal
 The secret wrested from me in her height
 Of nuptial love profess'd, carrying it straight
 To them who had corrupted her, my spies,
 And rivals ? In this other was there found
 More faith, who also in her prime of love,
 Spousal embraces, vitiated with gold,
 Though offer'd only, by the scent conceiv'd
 Her spurious first-born : treason against me ?
 Thrice she assay'd with flatt'ring prayers and sighs,
 And amorous reproaches, to win from me
 My capital secret, in what part my strength
 Lay stor'd, in what part summ'd, that she might
 know ;
 Thrice I deluded her, and turn'd to sport
 Her importunity, each time perceiving
 How openly, and with what impudence
 She purpos'd to betray me, and (which was worse

Than undissembled hate) with what contempt
She sought to make me traitor to myself ;
Yet the fourth time, when mustering all her wiles,
With blandish'd parleys, feminine assaults,
Tongue-batteries, she surceas'd not day nor night
To storm me, over-watch'd, and wearied out
At times when men seeks most repose and rest,
_ yielded, and unlock'd her all my heart,
Who with a grain of manhood well resolv'd
Might easily have shook off all her snares :
But foul effeminacy held me yok'd
Her bond slave ; O indignity, O blot
To honour and religion ! servile mind
Rewarded well with servile punishment !
The base degree to which I now am fallen,
These rags, this grinding is not yet so base
As was my former servitude, ignoble,
Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,
True slavery, and that blindness worse than this,
That saw not how degenerately I serv'd.

Man. I cannot praise thy marriage choices, son,
Rather approv'd them not ; but thou didst plead
Divine impulsion, prompting how thou might'st
Find some occasion to infest our foes.
I state not that ; this I am sure, our foes
Found soon occasion thereby to make thee
Their captive, and their triumph ; thou the sooner
Temptation found'st, or over-potent charms
To violate the secret trust of silence
Deposited within thee ; which to have kept
Tacit, was in thy power : true ; and thou bear'st
Enough, and more, the burden of that fault ;
Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying
That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains,
This day the Philistines a popular feast
Here celebrate in Gaza ; and proclaim
Great pomp, and sacrifice, and praises loud
To Dagon, as their god who hath deliver'd
Thee, Samson, bound and blind into their hands,

Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.
 So Dagon shall be magnified, and God,
 Besides whom is no god, compar'd with idols,
 Disglorified, blasphem'd, and had in scorn
 By the idolatrous rout amidst their wine ;
 Which to have come to pass by means of thee,
 Samson, of all thy sufferings think the heaviest,
 Of all reproach the most with shame that ever
 Could have befallen thee and thy father's house.

Sams. Father, I do acknowledge and confess
 That I this honour, I this pomp have brought
 To Dagon, and advanc'd his praises high
 Among the Heathen round ; to God have brought
 Dishonour, obloquy, and op'd the mouths
 Of idolists, and atheists ; have brought scandal
 To Israel, diffidence of God, and doubt
 In feeble hearts, propense enough before
 To waver, or fall off and join with idols ;
 Which is my chief affliction, shame, and sorrow,
 The anguish of my soul, that suffers not
 Mine eye to harbour sleep, or thoughts to rest.
 This only hope relieves me, that the strife
 With me hath end ; all the contest is now
 'Twixt God and Dagon ; Dagon hath presum'd,
 Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,
 His deity comparing and preferring
 Before the God of Abraham. He, be sure,
 Will not connive, or linger, thus provok'd,
 But will arise and his great name assert :
 Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
 Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
 Of all these boasted trophies won on me,
 And with confusion blank his worshippers.

Man. With cause this hope relieves me, and these
 words

I as a prophecy receive ; For God,
 Nothing more certain, will not long defer
 To vindicate the glory of his name
 Against all competition, nor will long

Indure it doubtful whether God be Lord,
Or Dagon. But for thee what shall be done ?
Thou must not in the meanwhile here forgot
Lie in this miserable loathsome plight
Neglected. I already have made way
To some Philistian lords, with whom to treat
About thy ransom ; well they may by this
Have satisfied their utmost of revenge
By pains and slaveries, worse than death inflicted
On thee, who now no more canst do them harm.

Sams. Spare that proposal, father, spare the trouble
Of that solicitation ; let me here,
As I deserve, pay on my punishment ;
And expiate, if possible, my crime,
Shameful garrulity. To have reveal'd
Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,
How heinous had the fact been, how deserving
Contempt and scorn of all, to be excluded
All friendship, and avoided as a blab,
The mark of fool set on his front ?
But I God's counsel have not kept, his holy secret
Presumptuously have publish'd, impiously,
Weakly at least, and shamefully : a sin
That Gentiles in their parables condemn
To their abyss and horrid pains confin'd.

Man. Be penitent and for thy fault contrite,
But act not in thy own affliction, son ;
Repent the sin, but if the punishment
Thou canst avoid, self-preservation bids ;
Or th' execution leave to high disposal,
And let another hand, not thine, exact
Thy penal forfeit from thyself ; perhaps
God will relent, and quit thee all his debt ;
Who ever more approves and more accepts
(Best pleas'd with humble and filial submission)
Him who imploring mercy sues for life,
Than who self rigorous chooses death as due ;
Which argues over-just, and self-displeas'd
For self-offence, more than for God offended.

Reject not then what offer'd means ; who knows
But God hath set before us, to return thee
Home to thy country and his sacred house,
Where thou mayst bring thy offerings to avert
His further ire, with prayers and vows renew'd ?

Sams. His pardon I implore ; but as for life,
To what end should I seek it ? when in strength
All mortals I excell'd, and great in hopes
With youthful courage and magnanimous thoughts
Of birth from heaven foretold and high exploits,
Full of divine instinct, after some proof
Of acts indeed heroic, far beyond
The sons of Anak, famous now and blaz'd,
Fearless of danger, like a petty god
I walk'd about admir'd of all, and dreaded
On hostile ground, none daring my affront.
Then swoln with pride into the snare I fell
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,
Softened with pleasure and voluptuous life ;
At length to lay my head and hallow'd pledge
Of all my strength in the lacivious lap
Of a deceitful concubine, who shorn me,
Like a tame wether, all my precious fleece.
Then turn'd me out ridiculous, despoil'd,
Shaven and disarm'd among mine enemies.

Chor. Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,
Which many a famous warrior overturns,
Thou couldst repress, nor did the dancing ruby,
Sparkling, out pour'd the flavour or the smell,
Or taste that cheers the hearts of gods and men,
Allure thee from the cool crystalline stream.

Sams. Wherever fountain or fresh current flow'd
Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure,
With touch ethereal of heaven's fiery rod,
I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying
Thirst, and refresh'd ; nor envied them the grape
Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

Chor. O madness, to think use of strongest wines
And strongest drinks our chief support of health,

When God with these forbidden made choice to rear
His mighty champion, strong above compare,
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.

Sams. But what avail'd this temp'rance, not complete

Against another object more enticing ?
What boots it at one gate to make defence,
And at another to let in the foe,
Effeminately vanquish'd ? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd,
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from heaven impos'd,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
A burdenous drone ; to visitants a gaze,
Or pitied object, these redundant locks
Robustuous to no purpose clust'ring down,
Vain monument of strength ; till length of years
And sedentary numbness craze my limbs
To a contemptible old age obscure ;
Here rather let me drudge and earn my bread,
Till vermin or the draff of servile food
Consume me, and oft-invoked death
Hasten the welcome end of all my pains.

Man. Wilt thou then serve the Philistines with
that gift

Which was expressly given thee to annoy them ?
Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle,
Inglorious, unemploy'd, with age out-worn.
But God who caus'd a fountain at thy prayer
From the dry ground to spring, thy thirst t' allay
After the brunt of battle, can as easy
Cause light again within thy eyes to spring,
Wherewith to serve him better than thou hast ;
And I persuade me so ; why else this strength
Miraculous yet remaining in those locks ?
His might continues in thee not for naught,
Nor shall his wondrous gifts be frustrate thus.

Sams. All otherwise to me my thoughts portend,
That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light,

Nor th' other light of life continue long,
 But yield to double darkness nigh at hand :
 So much I feel my genial spirits droop,
 My hopes all flat, nature within me seems
 In all her functions weary of herself,
 My race of glory run, and race of shame,
 And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

Man. Believe not these suggestions which proceed
 From anguish of the mind and humours black
 That mingle with thy fancy. I, however,
 Must not omit a father's timely care
 To prosecute the means of thy deliverance
 By ransom, or how else : meanwhile be calm,
 And healing words from these thy friends admit.

Sams. O that torment should not be confin'd
 To the body's wounds and sores,
 With maladies innumerable
 In heart, head, breast and reins ;
 But must secret passage find
 To th' inmost mind,
 There exercise all his fierce accidents,
 And on her purest spirits prey,
 As on entrails, joints, and limbs,
 With answerable pains but more intense,
 Though void of corporal sense.

My griefs not only pain me
 As a ling'ring disease,
 But finding no redress ferment and rage,
 Nor less than wounds immedicable
 Rankle, and fester, and gangrene
 To black mortification.
 'Thoughts, my tormentors arm'd with deadly stings
 Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,
 Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise
 Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb
 Or medicinal liquor can assuage,
 Nor breath of vernal air from snowy Alp.
 Sleep hath forsook and given me o'er
 To death's benumbing opium as my only cure :

Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,
And sense of heaven's desertion.

I was his nursling once and choice delight,
His destin'd from the womb,
Promis'd by heavenly message twice descending ;
Under his special eye
Abstemious I grew up and thriv'd amain ;
He led me on to mightiest deeds
Above the nerve of mortal arm
Against th' uncircumcis'd, our enemies ;
But now hath cast me off as never known,
And to those cruel enemies,
Whom I by his appointment had provok'd,
Left me all helpless with th' irreparable loss
Of sight, reserved alive to be repeated
The subject of their cruelty or scorn.
Nor am I in the list of them that hope ;
Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless ;
This one prayer yet remains, might I be heard,
No long petition, speedy death,
The close of all my miseries, and the balm.

Chor. Many are the sayings of the wise,
In ancient and in modern books inroll'd,
Extolling patience as the truest fortitude ;
And to the bearing well of all calamities,
All chances incident to man's frail life,
Consolatories writ
With studied argument and much persuasion sought,
Lenient of grief and anxious thought :
But with th' afflicted in his pangs their sound
Little prevails, or rather seems a tune
Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint !
Unless he feel within
Some source of consolation from above,
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength,
And fainting spirits uphold.

God of our fathers, what is man !
That thou tow'rds him with hand so various,
Or might I say contrarious,

Temper'st thy providence through his short course,
Not evenly as thou rul'st
Th' angelic orders and inferior creatures mute,
Irrational and brute.

Nor do I name of men the common rout,
That wand'ring loose about
Grow up and perish, as the summer fly,
Heads without name no more remember'd,
But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd
To some great work, thy glory,
And people's safety, which in part they effect :
Yet toward these thus dignified, thou oft,
Amidst their height of noon,
Changest thy countenance, and thy hand with no
regard

Of highest favours past
From thee on them, or them to thee of service.

Nor only dost degrade them, or remit
To life obscur'd, which were a fair dismissal,
But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them
high,

Unseemly falls in human eye,
Too grievous for the trespass or omission ;
Oft leav'st them to the hostile sword
Of heathen and profane, their carcasses
To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captiv'd ;
Or to th' unjust tribunals, under change of times
And condemnation of th' ungrateful multitude.
If these they 'scape, perhaps in poverty
With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,
Painful diseases and deform'd,
In crude old age :

Though not disordinate, yet causeless suff'ring
The punishment of dissolute days : in fine,
Just or unjust, alike seem miserable,
For oft alike both come to evil end.

So deal not with this once thy glorious champion,
The image of thy strength, and mighty minister.

What do I beg ? how hast thou dealt already ?
Behold him in this state calamitous, and turn
His labours, for thou canst, to peaceful end.

But who is this, what thing of sea or land ?
Female of sex it seems,
That so bedeck'd, ornate, and gay,
Comes this way sailing
Like a stately ship
Of Tarsus, bound for th' isles
Of Javan or Gadire,
With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
Sails fill'd, and streamers waving,
Court'd by all the winds that hold them play,
An amber scent of odorous perfume
Her harbinger, a damsel train behind ;
Some rich Philistian matron she may seem,
And now at nearer view, no other certain
Than Dalila thy wife.

Sams. My wife, my trait'ress, let her not come
near me.

Chor. Yet on she moves, now stands, and eyes
thee fix'd

About t' have spoke, but now, with head declin'd,
Like a fair flower surcharg'd with dew, she weeps,
And words address'd seem into tears dissolved,
Wetting the borders of her silken veil :
But now again she makes address to speak.

Dal. With doubtful feet and wavering resolution
I came, still dreading thy displeasure, Samson,
Which to have merited, without excuse,
I cannot but acknowledge ; yet if tears
May expiate (though the fact more evil drew
In the perverse event than I foresaw)
My penance hath not slacken'd, though my pardon
No way assur'd. But conjugal affection
Prevailing over fear, and timorous doubt,
Hath led me on, desirous to behold
Once more thy face, and know of thy estate,
If aught in my ability may serve

To lighten what thou suffer'st, and appease
Thy mind with what amends is in my power,
Though late, yet in some part to recompense
My rash but more unfortunate misdeed.

Sams. Out, out hyæna ; these are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
And reconciliation move with feign'd remorse,
Confess, and promise wonders in her change,
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
His virtue or weakness which way to assail :
Then with more cautious and instructed skill
Again transgresses, and again submits ;
That wisest and best men full oft beguil'd
With goodness principled not to reject
The penitent, but ever to forgive,
Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
Intangled with a pois'nous bosom snake,
If not by quick destruction soon cut off
As I by thee, to ages an example.

Dal. Yet hear me, Samson ; not that I endeavour
To lessen or extenuate my offence,
But that on th' other side if it be weigh'd
By itself, with aggravations not surcharg'd,
Or else with just allowance counterpois'd,
I may, if possible, thy pardon find
The easier towards me, or thy hatred less.
First granting, as I do, it was a weakness
In me, but incident to all our sex,
Curiosity, inquisitive, importune
Of secrets, then with like infirmity
To publish them, both common female faults :
Was it not weakness also to make known
For importunity, that is for naught,
Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety ?
To what I did thou show'dst me first the way,
But I to enemies reveal'd, and should not.

Nor shouldst thou have trusted that to woman's frailty :

Ere I to thee, thou to thyself was cruel.

Let weakness then with weakness come to parle

So near related, or the same of kind,

Thine forgive mine ; that men may censure thine

The gentler, if severely thou exact not

More strength from me, than in thyself was found.

And what if love, which thou interpret'st hate,

The jealousy of love, powerful of sway

In human hearts, nor less in mine tow'rds thee,

Caus'd what I did ? I saw thee mutable

Of fancy, fear'd lest one day thou wouldst leave me

As her at Timna, sought by all means therefore

How to endear, and hold thee to me firmest :

No better way I saw than by importuning

To learn thy secrets, get into my power

The key of strength and safety : thou wilt say,

Why then reveal'd ? I was assur'd by those

Who tempted me, that nothing was design'd

Against thee but safe custody, and hold :

That made for me ; I knew that liberty

Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprises,

While I at home sat full of cares and fears,

Wailing thy absence in my widow'd bed ;

Here I should still enjoy thee day and night

Mine and love's prisoner, not the Philistines,

Whole to myself, unhazarded abroad,

Fearless at home of partners in my love.

These reasons in love's law have pass'd for good,

Though fond and reasonless to some perhaps :

And love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much wo

Yet always pity or pardon hath obtain'd.

Be not unlike all others, not austere

As thou art strong, inflexible as steel.

If thou in strength all mortals dost exceed,

In uncompassionate anger do not so.

Sams. How cunningly the sorceress displays
Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine ?

That malice not repentance brought thee hither,
 By this appears ; I gave, thou say'st, th' example,
 I led the way ; bitter reproach, but true ;
 I to myself was false ere thou to me ;
 Such pardon therefore as I give my folly,
 Take to thy wicked deed ; which when thou see'st
 Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,
 Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather
 Confess it feign'd ; weakness is thy excuse,
 And I believe it, weakness to resist
 Philistian gold : if weakness may excuse,
 What murderer, what traitor, parricide,
 Incestuous, sacrilegious, but may plead it ?
 All wickedness is weakness : that plea, therefore,
 With God or man will gain thee no remission.
 But love constrain'd thee ; call it furious rage
 To satisfy thy lust ; love seeks to have love ;
 My love how couldst thou hope, who took'st the way
 To raise in me inexpiable hate,
 Knowing, as needs I must, by thee betray'd ?
 In vain thou striv'st to cover shame with shame,
 Or by evasions thy crime uncover'st more.

Dal. Since thou determin'st weakness for no plea
 In man or woman, though to thy own condemning,
 Hear what assaults I had, what snares besides,
 What sieges girt me round, ere I consented ;
 Which might have aw'd the best resolv'd of men,
 The constantest, to have yielded without blame.
 It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'st,
 That wrought with me : thou know'st the magis-
 trates

And princes of my country came in person,
 Solicited, commanded, threaten'd, urged,
 Adjur'd by all the bonds of civil duty
 And of religion, press'd how just it was,
 How honourable, how glorious to entrap
 A common enemy, who had destroy'd
 Such numbers of our nation : and the priest
 Was not behind but ever at my ear,

Preaching how meritorious with the gods
It would be to ensnare an irreligious
Dishonourer of Dagon : what had I
T' oppose against such powerful arguments ?
Only my love of thee held long debate,
And combated in silence all these reasons
With hard contest : at length that grounded maxim
So rife and celebrated in the mouths
Of wisest men, that to the public good
Private respects must yield, with grave authority
Took full possession of me and prevail'd ;
Virtue, as I thought, truth, duty so enjoining.

Sams. I thought where all thy circling wiles would
end ;

In feign'd religion, smooth hypocrisy.
But had thy love, still odiously pretended,
Been as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee
Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.
I, before all the daughters of my tribe
And of my nation, chose thee from among
My enemies, lov'd thee, as too well thou knew'st,
Too well, unbosom'd all my secrets to thee,
Not out of levity, but over-power'd
By thy request, who could deny thee nothing ;
Yet now am judg'd an enemy. Why then
Didst thou at first receive me for thy husband,
Then, as since then, thy country's foe profess'd ?
Being once a wife, for me thou wast to leave
Parents and country ; nor was I their subject,
Nor under their protection but my own,
Thou mine, not theirs : if aught against my life
Thy country sought of thee, it sought unjustly,
Against the law of nature, law of nations ;
No more thy country but an impious crew
Of men conspiring to uphold their state
By worse than hostile deeds, violating the ends
For which our country is a name so dear ;
Not therefore to be obey'd. But zeal mov'd thee ;
To please thy gods thou didst it ; gods unable

T' acquit themselves and prosecute their foes
But by ungodly deeds ; the contradiction
Of their own deity, gods cannot be ;
Less therefore to be pleased, obey'd, or fear'd.
These false pretexts and varnish'd colours failing,
Bare in thy guilt how foul must thou appear ?

Dal. In argument with men a woman ever
Goes by the worse, whatever be her cause.

Sams. For want of words no doubt, or lack of
breath ;

Witness when I was worried with thy peals.

Dal. I was a fool, too rash, and quite mistaken
In what I thought would have succeeded best.
Let me obtain forgiveness of thee, Samson,
Afford me place to show what recompense
Tow'rds thee I intend for what I have misdone,
Misguided ; only what remains past cure
Bear not too sensibly, nor still insist
To afflict thyself in vain : though sight be lost,
Life yet hath many solaces, enjoy'd,
Where other senses want not their delights,
At home, in leisure and domestic ease,
Exempt from many a care and chance to which
Eye-sight exposes daily men abroad.
I to the lords will intercede, not doubting
Their favourable ear, that I may fetch thee
From forth this loathsome prison-house, to abide
With me, where my redoubled love and care
With nursing diligence, to me glad office,
May ever tend about thee to old age
With all things grateful cheer'd, and so supplied,
That what by me thou hast lost thou least shalt
miss.

Sams. No, no, of my condition take no care ;
It fits not ; thou and I long since are twain ;
Nor think me so unwary or accurs'd,
To bring my feet again into the snare
Where once I have been caught ; I know thy trains
Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toils ;

Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms
No more on me have power, their force is null'd,
So much of adder's wisdom I have learn'd
To fence my ear against thy sorceries.
If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men
Lov'd, honour'd, fear'd me, thou alone couldst hate me
Thy husband, slight me, sell me, and forego me ;
How wouldst thou use me now, blind, and thereby
Deceivable, in most things as a child
Helpless, thence easily contemn'd, and scorn'd,
And last neglected ? How wouldst thou insult,
When I must live uxorious to thy will
In perfect thralldom, how again betray me,
Bearing my words and doings to the lords
To gloss upon, and censuring, frown or smile ?
This jail I count the house of liberty
To thine, whose doors my feet shall never enter.

Dal. Let me approach at least, and touch thy
hand.

Sams. Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance
wake

My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint.
At distance I forgive thee, go with that ;
Bewail thy falsehood, and the pious works
It hath brought forth to make thee memorable
Among illustrious women, faithful wives :
Cherish thy hasten'd widowhood with the gold
Of matrimonial treason : so farewell.

Dal. I see thou art implacable, more deaf
To prayers, than winds and seas, yet winds to seas
Are reconcil'd at length, and sea to shore ;
Thy anger, unappeasible, still rages,
Eternal tempest never to be calm'd.
Why do I humble thus myself, and suing
For peace, reap nothing but repulse and hate ?
Bid go with evil omen and the brand
Of infamy upon my name denounc'd ?
To mix with thy concernments I desist
Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own.

Fame, if not double fac'd is double moun'd,
And with contrary blast proclaims most deeds;
On both his wings, one black, the other white,
Bears greatest names in his wild airy flight.
My name perhaps among the circumcis'd
In Dan, in Judah, and the bordering tribes,
To all posterity may stand defam'd,
With malediction mention'd, and the blot
Of falsehood most unconjugal traduc'd.
But in my country, where I most desire,
In Ecron, Gaza, Asdod, and in Gath,
I shall be nam'd among the famousest
Of women, sung at solemn festivals,
Living and dead recorded, who to save
Her country from a fierce destroyer, chose
Above the faith of wedlock-bands, my tomb
With odours visited, and annual flowers;
Not less renown'd than in mount Ephraim
Jael, who with inhospitable guile
Smote Sisera sleeping, through the temples nail'd.
Nor shall I count it heinous to enjoy
The public marks of honour and reward
Conferr'd upon me, for the piety
Which to my country I was judg'd to have shown.
At this who ever envies or repines,
I leave him to his lot, and like my own.

Chor. She's gone, a manifest serpent by her sting
Discover'd in the end, till now conceal'd.

Sams. So let her go, God sent her to debase me,
And aggravate my folly, who committed
To such a viper his most sacred trust
Of secrecy, my safety and my life.

Chor. Yet beauty, though injurious, hath strange
power,
After offence returning, to regain
Love once possess'd, nor can be easily
Repuls'd without much inward passion felt
And secret sting of amorous remorse.

Sams. Love quarrels oft in pleasing concord end,
Not wedlock-treach'ry endangering life.

Chor. It is not virtue, wisdom, valour, wit,
Strength, comeliness of shape, or amplest merit
That woman's love can win or long inherit;
But what it is, hard is to say,
arder to hit,

(Which way soever men refer it.)
Much like thy riddle, Samson, in one day,
Or seven, though one should musing sit.

If any of these or all, the Timnian bride
Had not so soon preferr'd
Thy paranymp, worthless to thee compar'd
Successor in thy bed,
Nor but so loosely disallied
Their nuptials, not this last so treacherously
Had shorn the fatal harvest of thy head.
Is it for that such outward ornament
Was lavish'd on their sex, that inward gifts
Were left for haste unfinish'd, judgment scant,
Capacity not rais'd to apprehend
Or value what is best

In choice, but oftēst to affect the wrong?
Or was too much of self-love mix'd,
Of constancy no root infix'd,
That either they love nothing, or not long?

What'er it be to wisest men and best,
Seeming at first all heavenly under virgin veil,
Soft, modest, meek, demure,
Once join'd, the contrary she proves, a thorn
Intestine, far within defensive arms
A cleaving mischief, in his way to virtue
Adverse and turbulent, or by her charms
Draws him awry enslav'd
With dotage, and his sense deprav'd
To folly and shameful deeds which ruin ends.
What pilot so expert but needs must wreck
Embark'd with such a steersmate at the helm?
Favour'd of heaven who finds

One virtuous rarely found,
 That in domestic good combines :
 Happy that house ! his way to peace is smooth.
 But virtue which breaks through all opposition,
 And all temptation can remove,
 Most shines and most is acceptable above.

Therefore God's universal law
 Gave to the man despotic power
 Over his female in due awe,
 Not from that right to part an hour,
 Smile she or lour :
 So shall he least confusion draw
 On his whole life, not sway'd
 By female usurpation, or dismay'd.
 But had we best retire, I see a storm ?

Sams. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.

Chor. But this another kind of tempest brings.

Sams. Be less abstruse, my riddling days are past.

Chor. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
 The bait of honied words ; a rougher tongue
 Draws hitherwards, I know him by his stride,
 The giant Harapha of Gath, his look
 Haughty as is his pile high-built and proud.
 Comes he in peace ? what wind hath blown him
 hither

I less conjecture than when first I saw
 The sumptuous Dalila floating this way :
 His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.

Sams. Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.

Chor. His fraught we soon shall know, he now
 arrives.

Har. I come not, Samson, to condole thy chance,
 As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,
 Though for no friendly intent. I am of Gath :
 Men call me Harapha, of stock renown'd
 As Og or Anak and the Emims old
 That Kiriathaim held, thou know'st me now
 If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
 Of thy prodigious might and feats perform'd

Incredible to me, in this displeas'd
 That I was never present on the place
 Of those encounters, where we might have tried
 Each other's force in camp or listed field :
 And now am come to see of whom such noise
 Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
 If thy appearance answer loud report.

Sams. The way to know were not to see but taste.

Har. Dost thou already single me ? I thought
 Gyves and the mill had tam'd thee. O that fortune
 Had brought me to the field, where thou art fam'd
 To have wrought such wonders with an ass' jaw ;
 I should have forc'd thee soon wish other arms,
 Or left thy carcass where the ass lay thrown :
 So had the glory of prowess been recover'd
 To Palestine, won by a Philistine
 From the unforeskin'd race, of whom thou bear'st
 The highest name for valiant acts ; that honour
 Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,
 I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.

Sams. Boast not of what thou would'st have done,
 but do

What then thou wouldst, thou seest it in thy hand.

Har. To combat with a blind man I disdain,
 And thou hast need much washing to be touch'd.

Sams. Such usage as your honourable lords
 Afford me, assassinated and betray'd,
 Who durst not with their whole united powers
 In fight withstand me single and unarm'd,
 Nor in the house with chamber ambushes
 Close-banded durst attack me, no not sleeping,
 Till they had hir'd a woman with their gold,
 Breaking her marriage faith to circumvent me.
 Therefore without feign'd shifts let be assign'd
 Some narrow place enclos'd where sight may give
 thee,

Or rather flight, no great advantage on me ;
 Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy helmet
 And brigandine of brass, thy broad habergeon,

Vant-brass and greaves, and guantlet, add thy spear,
A weaver's beam, and seven-times-folded shield,
I only with an oaken staff will meet thee
And raise such outcries on thy clatter'd iron,
Which long shall not withhold me from thy head,
That in a little time while breath remains thee,
Thou oft shalt wish thyself at Gath to boast
Again in safety what thou wouldst have done
To Samson, but shalt never see Gath more.

Har. Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms,
Which greatest heroes have in battle worn,
Their ornament and safety, had not spells
And black enchantments, some magician's art
Armed thee, or charmed thee strong which thou from
heaven

Feign'dst at thy birth was given thee in thy hair,
Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs
Were bristles, rang'd like those that ridge the back
Of chaf'd wild boars, or ruffled porcupines.

Sams. I know no spells, use no forbidden arts ;
My trust is in the living God, who gave me
At my nativity this strength, diffus'd
No less through all my sinews, joints and bones,
Than thine, while I preserv'd these locks unshorn,
The pledge of my unviolated vow.
For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy god,
Go to his temple, invoke his aid
With solemnest devotion, spread before him
How highly it concerns his glory now
To frustrate and dissolve these magic spells,
Which I to be the power of Israel's God
Avow, and challenge Dagon to the test,
Offering to combat thee his champion bold
With th' utmost of his godhead seconded :
Then thou shalt see, or rather to thy sorrow
Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine.

Har. Presume not on thy God, whate'er he be,
Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off
Quite from his people, and deliver'd up

Into thy enemies' hand, permitted them
To put out both thine eyes, and fetter'd send thee
Into the common prison, there to grind
Among the slaves and asses, thy comrades,
As good for nothing else, no better service
With those thy boist'rous locks, no worthy match
For valour to assail, nor by the sword
Of noble warrior, so to stain his honour,
But by the barber's razor best subdued.

Sams. All these indignities, for such they are
From thine, these evils I deserve and more,
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me
Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon,
Whose ear is ever open, and his eye
Gracious to re-admit the suppliant ;
In confidence whereof I once again
Defy thee to the trial of mortal fight,
By combat to decide whose god is God,
Thine, or whom I with Israel's sons adore.

Har. Fair honour that thou dost thy God, in trusting
He will accept thee to defend his cause,
A murderer, a revolter, and a robber.

Sams. Tongue-doughty Giant how dost thou prove
me these ?

Har. Is not thy nation subject to our lords ?
Their magistrates confess'd it, when they took thee
As a league-breaker, and deliver'd bound
Into our hands : for hadst thou not committed
Notorious murder on those thirty men
At Ascalon, who never did thee harm,
Then like a robber stripp'dst them of their robes ?
The Philistines, when thou had'st broke the league,
Went up with armed powers thee only seeking,
To others did no violence nor spoil.

Sams. Among the daughters of the Philistines
I chose a wife, which argued me no foe ;
And in your city held my nuptial feast :
But your ill-meaning politician lords,
Under pretence of bridal friends and guests,

Appointed to await me thirty spies,
 Who threat'ning cruel death constrain'd the bride
 To wring from me and tell to them my secret,
 That solv'd the riddle which I had propos'd
 When I perceiv'd all set on enmity,
 As on my enemies, wherever chanc'd
 I us'd hostility, and took their spoil
 To pay my underminers in their coin.
 My nation was subjected to your lords.
 It was the force of conquest ; force with force
 Is well ejected, when the conquer'd can.
 But I a private person, whom my country,
 As a league-breaker, gave up bound, presum'd
 Single rebellion and did hostile acts ;
 I was no private but a person rais'd
 With strength sufficient and command from Heav'n
 To free my country ; if their servile minds
 Me their deliverer sent would not receive,
 But to their masters gave me up for naught,
 Th' unworthier they ; whence to this day they serve.
 I was to do my part from heaven assign'd,
 And had perform'd it if my known offence
 Had not disabled me, not all your force :
 These shifts refuted, answer thy appellant
 Though by his blindness maim'd for high attempts
 Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,
 As a petty enterprize of small enforce.

Har. With thee a man condemn'd, a slave enroll'd,
 Due by the law to capital punishment ?
 To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

Sams. Cam'st thou for this, vain boaster to survey me,

To descant on my strength, and give thy verdict ?
 Come nearer, part not hence so slight inform'd ;
 But take good heed my hand survey not thee.

Har. O Baal-zebub ! can my ears unus'd
 Hear these dishonours, and not render death ?

Sams. No man withholds thee, nothing from thy hand

Fear I incurable ; bring up thy van,
My heels are fetter'd, but my fist is free.

Har. This insolence other kind of answer fits

Sams. Go, baffled coward, lest I run upon thee,
Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,
And with one buffet lay thy structure low,
Or swing thee in the air, then dash thee down
To the hazard of thy brains and shatter'd sides.

Har. By Astaroth ere long thou shalt lament
These braveries in irons loaden on thee.

Chor. His giantship is gone somewhat crest-fallen,
Stalking with less unconscionable strides,
And lower looks, but in a sultry chafe.

Sam. I dread him not, nor all his giant-brood
Though fame divulge him Father of five sons,
All of gigantic size, Goliath chief.

Chor. He will directly to the lords, I fear,
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other yet further to afflict thee.

Sams. He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise
Whether he durst accept the offer or not,
And that he durst not plain enough appear'd,
Much more affliction than already felt
They cannot well impose, nor I sustain,
If they intend advantage of my labours,
The work of many hands which earns my keeping
With no small profit daily to my owners.
But come what will, my deadliest foe will prove
My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence,
The worst that he can give, to me the best.
Yet so it may fall out, because their ends,
Hate, not help to me, it may with mine
Draw their own ruin who attempt the deed.

Chor. O how comely it is, and how reviving
For the spirits of just men long oppress'd,
When God into the hands of their deliverer
Puts invincible might
To quell the mighty of the earth, th' oppressor,

The brute and boist'rous force of violent men
Hardy and industrious to support
Tyrannic power, but raging to pursue
The righteous, and all such as honour truth;
He all their ammunition
And feats of war defeats
With plain heroic magnitude of mind,
And celestial vigour arm'd,
Their armouries and magazines contemns,
Renders them useless, while
With winged expedition
Swift as the lightning glance he executes
His errand on the wicked, who surpris'd
Lose their defence distracted and amazed.

But patience is more oft the exercise
Of saints, the trial of their fortitude,
Making them each his own deliverer,
And victor over all
That tyranny or fortune can inflict,
Either of these is in thy lot
Samson, with might indued
Above the sons of men ; but sight bereav'd
May chance to number thee with those
Whom patience finally must crown.

This idol's day hath been to thee no day of rest,
Labouring thy mind
More than the working day thy hands.
And yet perhaps more trouble is behind,
For I descry this way
Some other tending, in his hand
A sceptre or quaint staff he bears,
Comes on amain, speed in his look.
By his habit I discern him now
A public officer, and now at hand.
His message will be short and voluble.

Off. Hebrews, the pris'ner Samson here I seek.

Chor. His manacles remark him, there he sits.

Off. Samson, to thee our lords thus bid me say :
This day to Dagon is a solemn feast,

With sacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games ;
Thy strength they know surpassing human rate,
And now some public proof thereof require
To honour this great feast, and great assembly ;
Rise therefore, with all speed and come along,
Where I will see thee hearten'd and fresh clad
To appear as fits before th' illustrious lords.

Sams. Thou know'st I am an Hebrew, therefore tel
them,

Our law forbids at their religious rites
My presence ; for that cause I cannot come.

Off. This answer, be assur'd, will not content them.

Sams. Have they not sword-players, and every sort
Of gymnic artists, wrestlers, riders, runners,
Jugglers and dancers, antics, mummers, mimics,
But they must pick me out with shackles tir'd,
And over-labour'd at their public mill,
To make them sport with blind activity ?
Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels
On my refusal to distress me more,
Or make a game of my calamities ?
Return the way thou cam'st, I will not come.

Off. Regard thyself, this will offend them highly.

Sams. Myself ! my conscience and internal peace.
Can they think me so broken, so debas'd
With corporal servitude, that my mind ever
Will condescend to such absurd commands ?
Although their drudge, to be their fool or jester,
And in my midst of sorrow and heart grief
To show them feats, and play before their god,
The worst of all indignities, yet on me
Join'd with extreme contempt ? I will not come.

Off. My message was impos'd on me with speed,
Brooks no delay : is this thy resolution ?

Sams. So take it with what speed thy message
needs.

Off. I am sorry what this stoutness will produce.

Sams. Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow
indeed.

Chor. Consider, Samson ; matters now are strain'd
Up to the height, whether to hold or break ;
He's gone, and who knows how he may report
Thy words by adding fuel to the flame ?
Expect another message more imperious,
More loudly thund'ring than thou well wilt bear

Sams. Shall I abuse this consecrated gift
Of strength, again returning with my hair
After my great transgression, so requite
Favour renew'd, and add a greater sin
By prostituting holy things to idols ;
A Nazarite in place abominable,
Vaunting my strength in honour to their Dagon ?
Besides how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,
What act more execrably unclean, profane ?

Chor. Yet with this strength thou serv'st the Phi-
listines,
Idolatrous, uncircumcis'd, unclean.

Sams. Not in their idol-worship, but by labour
Honest and lawful to deserve my food
Of those who have me in their civil power.

Chor. Where the heart joins not, outward acts
defile not.

Sams. Where outward force constrains, the sen-
tence holds.

But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon,
Not dragging ? the Philistian lords command.
Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, vent'ring to displease
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
Set God behind : which in his jealousy
Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness.
Yet that he may dispense with me or thee
Present in temples at idolatrous rites
For some important cause, thou need'st not doubt.

Chor. How thou wilt here come off surmounts my
reach.

Sams. Be of good courage, I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me which dispose

To something extraordinary my thoughts.
 I with this messenger will go along,
 Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour
 Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.
 If there be aught of presage in the mind,
 This day will be remarkable in my life
 By some great act, or of my days the last.

Chor. In time thou hast resolv'd, the man returns.

Off. Samson, this second message from our lords
 To thee I am bid say : Art thou our slave,
 Our captive, at the public mill our drudge,
 And dar'st thou at our sending and command
 Dispute thy coming ? come without delay ;
 Or we shall find such engines to assail
 And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force,
 Though thou wert firmlier fasten'd than a rock.

Sams. I could be well content to try their art,
 Which to no few of them would prove pernicious.
 Yet knowing their advantages too many,
 Because they shall not trail me through their streets
 Like a wild beast, I am content to go,
 Masters' commands come with a power resistless
 To such as owe them absolute subjection ;
 And for a life who will not change his purpose ?
 (So mutable are all the ways of men,)
 Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply
 Scandalous or forbidden in our law.

Off. I praise thy resolution : doff these links
 By this compliance thou wilt win the lords
 To favour, and perhaps to set thee free.

Sams. Brethren, farewell ; your company along
 I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them
 To see me girt with friends ; and how the sight
 Of me as of a common enemy,
 So dreaded once, may now exasperate them
 I know not : lords are lordliest in their wine ;
 And the well-feasted priest then soonest fir'd
 With zeal, if aught religion seem concern'd ;
 No less the people on their holy-days

Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable :
Happen what may, of me expect to hear
Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy
Our God, our law, my nation, or myself,
The last of me or no I cannot warrant.

Chor. Go, and the Holy One
Of Israel be thy guide
To what may serve his glory best, and spread hi
name

Great among the heathen round ;
Send thee the angel of thy birth to stand
Fast by thy side, who from thy father's field,
Rode up in flames after this message told
Of thy conception, and be now a shield
Of fire ; that Spirit that first rushed on thee
In the camp of Dan
Be efficacious in thee now at need ;
For never was from heaven imparted
Measure of strength so great to mortal seed,
As in thy wondrous actions hath been seen.
But wherefore comes old Manoah in such haste
With youthful steps ? much livelier than erewhile
He seems ; supposing here to find his son,
Or of him bringing to us some glad news ?

Man. Peace with you, brethren ; my induce-
ment hither
Was not at present here to find my son,
By order of the lords new parted hence
To come and play before them at their feast.
I heard all as I came, the city rings,
And numbers thither flock, I had no will,
Lest I should see him forc'd to things unseemly.
But that which mov'd my coming now, was chiefly
To give ye part with me what hope I have
With good success to work his liberty.

Chor. That hope would much rejoice us to partake
With thee ; say, reverend Sire, we thirst to hear.

Man. I have attempted one by one the lords
Either at home, or through the high street passing,

With supplication prone and father's tears,
To accept of ransom for my son their pris'ner.
Some much averse I found and wondrous harsh,
Contemptuous proud, set on revenge and spite ;
That part most reverenc'd Dagon and his priests :
Others more moderate seeming, but their aim
Private reward, for which both God and state
They easily would set to sail ; a third
More generous far and civil, who confess'd
They had enough reveng'd, having reduc'd
Their foe to misery beneath their fears,
The rest was magnanimity to remit,
If some convenient ransom were prepos'd.
What noise or shout was that ? it tore the sky.

Chor. Doubtless the people shouting to behold
Their once great dread, captive, and blind before them,
Or at some proof of strength before them shown.

Man. His ransom, if my whole inheritance
May compass it, shall willingly be paid
And number'd down : much rather I shall choose
To live the poorest in my tribe, than richest,
And he in that calamitous prison left.
No, I am fix'd not to part hence without him.
For his redemption all my patrimony
If need be, I am ready to forego
And quit : not wanting him, I shall want nothing.

Chor. Fathers are wont to lay up for their sons.
Thou for thy son art bent to lay out all ;
Sons wont to nurse their parents in old age,
Thou in old age car'st how to nurse thy son
Made older than thy age through eye-sight lost.

Man. It shall be my delight to tend his eyes,
And view him sitting in the house, ennobled
With all those high exploits by him achiev'd,
And on his shoulders waving down those locks,
That of a nation arm'd the strength contain'd :
And I persuade me God had not permitted
His strength again to grow up with his hair
Garrison'd round about him like a camp

Of faithful soldiery were not his purpose
To use him further yet in some great service,
Not to sit idle with so great a gift
Useless, and thence ridiculous about him.
And since his strength with eye-sight was not lost.
God will restore his eye-sight to his strength.

Chor. Thy hopes are not ill-founded, nor seem vain
Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon
Conceiv'd agreeable to a father's love,
In both, which we, as next, participate.

Man. I know your friendly minds and—O what
noise?

Mercy of heaven, what hideous noise was that?
Horribly loud, unlike the former shout.

Chor. Noise call you it or universal groan,
As if the whole inhabitation perish'd!
Blood, death, and deathful deeds are in that noise,
Ruin, destruction at the utmost point.

Man. Of ruin indeed, methought I heard the noise
Oh it continues, they have slain my son.

Chor. Thy son is rather slaying them, that outcry
From slaughter of one foe could not ascend.

Man. Some dismal accident it needs must be;
What shall we do, stay here or run and see?

Chor. Best keep together here, lest running thither
We unawares run into danger's mouth.

This evil on the Philistines is fallen;
From whom could else a general cry be heard?
The sufferers then will scarce molest us here,
From other hands we need not much to fear.

What if his eye-sight (for to Israel's God
Nothing is hard) by miracle restor'd,
He now be dealing dole among his foes,
And over heaps of slaughter'd walk his way?

Man. That were a joy presumptuous to be thought.

Chor. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
For his people of old; what hinders now?

Man. He can I know, but doubt to think he will.

Yet hope would fain subscribe, and tempts belief.
A little stay will bring some notice hither.

Chor. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner
For evil news rides post, while good news baits.
And to our wish I see one hither speeding,
An Hebrew, as I guess, and of our tribe.

Mess. O whither shall I run, or which way fly
The sight of this so horrid spectacle,
Which erst my eyes beheld and yet behold?
For dire imagination still pursues me.
But providence or instinct of nature seems,
Or reason though disturb'd, and scarce consulted,
To have guided me aright, I know not how,
To thee first reverend Manoah, and to these
My countrymen, whom here I knew remaining,
As at some distance from the place of horror,
So in the sad event too much concern'd.

Man. The accident was loud, and here before thee
With rueful cry, yet what it was we hear not:
No preface needs, thou seest we long to know.

Mess. It would burst forth, but I recover breath
And sense distract, to know well what I utter.

Man. Tell us the sum, the circumstance defer.

Mess. Gaza yet stands, but all her sons are fallen,
All in a moment overwhelm'd and fallen.

Man. Sad, but thou know'st to Israelites not
saddest
The desolation of a hostile city.

Mess. Feed on that first, there may in grief be
surfeit.

Man. Relate by whom.

Mess. By Samson.

Man. That still lessens
The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.
Mess. Ah Monoah, I refrain too suddenly
To utter what will come at last too soon;
Lest evil tidings with too rude irruption
Hitting thy aged ear should pierce too deep.

Man. Suspense in news is torture, speak them out.

Mess. Take then the worst in brief, Samson is dead.

Man. The worst indeed, O all my hope's defeated
To free him hence ! but death who sets all free
Hath paid his ransom now and full discharge.
What windy joy this day had I conceiv'd
Hopeful of his delivery, which now proves
Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring
Nipp'd with the lagging rear of winter's frost !
Yet ere I give the reins to grief, say first,
How died he ; death to life is crown or shame.
All by him fell thou say'st, by whom fell he,
What glorious hand gave Samson his death wound ?

Mess. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.

Man. Wearied with slaughter then or how ? explain.

Mess. By his own hands.

Man. Self-violence ! what cause
Brought him so soon at variance with himself
Among his foes ?

Mess. Inevitable cause
At once both to destroy and be destroy'd ;
The edifice, where all were met to see him,
Upon their heads and on his own he pull'd.

Man. O lastly over-strong against thyself !
A dreadul way thou took'st to thy revenge.
More than enough we know ; but while things yet
Are in confusion, give us if thou canst,
Eye-witness of what first or last was done,
Relation more particular and distinct.

Mess. Occsaions drew me early to this city,
And as the gates I enter'd with sun-rise,
The morning trumpets' festival proclaim'd
Through each high street : little I had despatch'd,
When all abroad was rumour'd that this day
Samson should be brought forth, to show the people
Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games ;
I sorrow'd at his captive state, but minded
Not to be absent at that spectacle.

The building was a spacious theatre
Half-round on two main pillars vaulted high,
With seats where all the lords and each degree
Of sort, might sit in order to behold ;
The other side was open, where the throng
On banks and scaffolds under sky might stand ;
I among these aloof obscurely stood.

The feast and noon grew high, and sacrifice
Had fill'd their hearts with mirth, high cheer,
wine,

When to their sports they turn'd. Immediately
Was Samson as a public servant brought,
In their state livery clad ; before him pipes
And timbrels, on each side went armed guards,
Both horse and foot, before him and behind
Archers, and slingers, cataphracts and spears.
At sight of him the people with a shout
Rifted the air, clamouring their god with praise,
Who had made their dreadful enemy their thrall
He patient but undaunted where they led him,
Came to the place, and what was set before him
Which without help of eye might be assay'd
To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still perform'd
All with incredible, stupendous force :

None daring to appear antagonist.

At length for intermission sake they led him
Between the pillars ; he his guide repuested
(For so from such as nearer stood we heard)
As over-tir'd to let him lean a while

With both his arms on those two massy pillars,
That to the arched roof gave main support.
He unsuspecting led him ; which when Samson
Felt in his arms, with head a while inclin'd,
And eyes fast fix'd he stood, as one who pray'd,
Or some great matter in his mind revolv'd :
At last with head erect thus cried aloud,
Hitherto, lords, what your commands impos'd
I have perform'd, as reason was, obeying,
Not without wonder or delight beheld :

Now of my own accord such other trial
I mean to show you of my strength, yet greater;
As with amaze shall strike all who behold.
This utter'd, straining all his nerves he bow'd,
As with the force of winds and waters pent,
When mountains tremble, those two massy pillars
With horrible convulsion to and fro,
He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came and drew
The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,
Lords, ladies, captains, counsellors, or priests,
Their choice nobility and flower, not only
Of this but each Philistian city round,
Met from all parts to solemnize this feast.
Samson with these inmix'd, inevitably
Pull'd down the same destruction on himself;
The vulgar only scap'd who stood without.

Chor. O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious!
Living or dying thou hast fulfill'd
The work for which thou wast foretold
To Israel, and now liest victorious
Among thy slain self-kill'd,
Not willingly, but tangled in the fold
Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoin'd
Thee with thy slaughter'd foes in number more
Than all thy life had slain before.

Semichor. While their hearts were jocund and
sublime,
Drunk with idolatry, drunk with wine,
And fat regorg'd of bulls and goats,
Chaunting their idol, and preferring
Before our living Dread who dwells
In Silo his bright sanctuary:
Among them He a spirit of phrensy sent
Who hurt their minds
And urg'd them on with mad desire
To call in haste for their destroyer;
They only set on sport and play
Unweetingly importun'd

Their own destruction to come speedy upon them.
So fond are mortal men
Fallen into wrath divine
As their own ruin on themselves to invite,
Insensate left, or to sense reprobate,
And with blindness internal struck.

Semichor. But he though blind of sight,
Despis'd and thought extinguish'd quite,
With inward eyes illuminated,
His fiery virtue rous'd
From under ashes into sudden flame,
And as an evening dragon came
Assailant on the perched roosts,
And nests in order rang'd
Of tame villatic fowl ; but as an eagle
His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads.
So virtue given for lost,
Depress'd, and overthrown, as seem'd,
Like that self-begotten bird
In the Arabian woods imboss'd,
That no second knows nor third,
And lay erewhile a holocaust,
From out her ashy womb now teem'd,
Revives, refflourishes, then vigorous most
When most unactive deem'd.
And though her body die, her fame survives
A secular bird ages of lives.

Man. Come, come, no time for lamentation now,
Nor much more cause ; Samson hath quit himself
Like Samson, and heroically hath finish'd
A life heroic, on his enemies
Fully reveng'd, hath left them years of mourning,
And lamentations to the sons of Caphtor
Through all Philistian bounds ; to Israel
Honour hath left, and freedom, let but them
Find courage to lay hold on this occasion ;
To himself and father's house eternal fame ;
And which is best and happiest yet, all this
With God not parted from him, as was fear'd,

But favouring and assisting to the end.
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breast, no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise or blame, nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.
Let us go find the body where it lies
Soak'd in his enemies' blood, and from the stream
With lavers pure and cleansing herbs wash off
The clotted gore. I with what speed the while
(Gaza is not in plight to say us nay)
Will send for all my kindred, all my friends,
'To fetch him hence, and solemnly attend
With silent obsequy and funeral train
Home to his father's house : there will I build him
A monument, and plant it round with shade
Of laurel ever green, and branching palm,
With all his trophies hung, and acts enroll'd
In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.
Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
And from his memory inflame their breasts
To matchless valour, and adventures high :
The virgins also shall on feastful days
Visit his tomb with flowers, only bewailing
His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
From whence captivity and loss of eyes.

Chor. All is best, though we oft doubt
What th' unsearchable dispose
Of highest wisdom brings about,
And ever best found in the close.
Oft he seems to hide his face,
But unexpectedly returns,
And to his faithful champion hath in place
Bore witness gloriously ; whence Gaza mourns
And all that band them to resist
His uncontrollable intent ;
His servants he with new acquist
Of true experience from this great event
With peace and consolation hath dismissed,
And calm of mind all passion spent.

END OF SAMSON AGONISTES.



POEMS

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

L' ALLEGRO.*

HENCE, loathed Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights un-
holy'

Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;
There under ebon shades, and low brow'd rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,

In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come, thou goddess fair and free
In heaven yclep'd Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth,
With two sister Graces more
To ivy-crown'd Bacchus bore;
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Or whether (as some sages sing)
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying;
There on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses wash'd in dew,
Fill'd her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonaire.

* *L' Allegro* is the cheerful merry man; and in this poem he describes the course of mirth in the country and in the city from morning to noon, and from noon to night.

Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods and becks, and wreathed smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter, holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee,
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty.
And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreprieved pleasure free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull Night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come in spite of Sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock with lively din
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumb'ring Morn,
From the side of some hoar hill
Through the high wood echoing shrill.
Sometime walking not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state,
Rob'd in flames, and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight,
While the ploughman near at hand

Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milk-maid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
While the landscape round it measures,
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray,
Mountains on whose barren breast
The lab'ring clouds do often rest ;
Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks and rivers wide :
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosom'd high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The Cynosure of neighb'ring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis, met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes,
Which the meat-handed Phyllis dresses ,
And then in haste her bower she leaves ;
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves ;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tann'd haycock in the mead.

Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecs sound
To many a youth, and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequer'd shade ;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sun-shine holiday,
Till the live-long day-light fail ;
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How fairy Mab the junkets eat,

She was pinch'd, and pull'd, she said,
And he, by friar's lantern led,
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat,
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn,
That ten day-lab'rors could not end ;
Then lies him down the lubbar-fiend,
And stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.

Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep.
Tower'd cities please us then ;
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask and antique pageantry,
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well trod stage anon,
If Johnson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespear, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.

And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,

The melting voice through mazes running,
 Untwisting all the chains that tie
 The hidden soul of harmony ;
 That Orpheus' self may heave his head
 From golden slumber on a bed
 Of heap'd Elysian flowers, and hear
 Such strains as would have won the ear
 Of Pluto, to have quite set free
 His half-regain'd Eurydice.

These delights, if thou canst give,
 Mirth, with thee I mean to live,

IL PENSEROSO.*

HENCE, vain deluding joys,
 The brood of Folly without father bred !
 How little you bested,
 Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys .
 Dwell in some idol brain,
 And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess
 As thick and numberless
 As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
 Or likest hovering dreams,
 The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
 But hail, thou goddess, sage and holy,
 Hail, divinest melancholy !
 Whose saintly visage is too bright
 To hit the sense of human sight,
 And, therefore, to our weaker view
 O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue ;

* *Il Penseroso* is the thoughtful, melancholy man; and this poem, both in its model and principal circumstances, is taken from a song in praise of melancholy in Beaumont, and Fletcher's comedy, called *The Nice Valour, or Passionate Madman*.

Black, but such as in esteem,
Prince Memmon's sister might beseem,
Or that starr'd Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauties praise above
The Sea-nymphs, and their powers offended,
Yet thou art higher far descended,
Thee bright-hair'd Vesta long of yore
To solitary Saturn bore ;
His daughter she, (in Saturn's reign,
Such mixture was not held a stain,)
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
While yet there was no fear of Jove.

Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of Cyprus lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes :
There held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast,
Thou fix them on the earth as fast :
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing.
And add to these retired Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure :
But first and chiefest, with thee bring,
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The cherub Contemplation ;
And the mute Silence hist along,

Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
Gently o'er th'accustom'd oak ;
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy !
Thee, chantress, oft, the woods among,
I woo, to hear thy evening-song ;
And missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wand'ring moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way,
And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-water'd shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar ;
Or if the air will not permit,
Some still removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the belman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm :
Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato to unfold
What worlds, or what vast regions hold
Th' immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook :
And of those Demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,

Whose power hath a true consent
With planet, or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes' or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine,
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath thy buskin'd stage.

But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes, as warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made hell grant what love did seek.
Or call up him that left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That own'd the virtuous ring and glass,
And of the wond'rous horse of brass,
On which the Tartar king did ride ;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of tourneys and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.

Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not trick'd and frounc'd as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kerchieft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or usher'd with a shower still
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
To arched walks of twilight groves,

And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves.
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe with heaved stroke
Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such concert as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings in airy stream
Of lively portraiture display'd,
Softly on my eyelids laid.

And as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
Or th' unseen genius of the wood.

But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloisters pale,
And love the high embowed roof,
With antique pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voic'd choir below,
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes !

And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell.
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that Heaven doth show,
And every herb that sips the dew ;

Till old experience do attain
 To something like prophetic strain.
 These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
 And I with thee will choose to live.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT,
 DYING OF A COUGH.*

I.

O FAIREST flower no sooner blown but blasted,
 Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,
 Summer's chief honour, if thou hadst out-lasting
 Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry:
 For he being amorous on that lovely dye
 That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss,
 But kill'd, alas, and then bewail'd his fatal bliss.

II.

For since grim Aquilo his charioteer
 By boist'rous rape th' Athenian damsel got,
 He thought it touch'd his deity full near,
 If likewise he some fair one wedded not,
 Thereby to wipe away th' infamous blot
 Of long-uncoupled bed, and childless eld,
 Which 'mongst the wanton gods a foul reproach
 was held.

III.

So, mounting up in icy-pearled car,
 Through middle empire of the freezing air,
 He wander'd long, till thee he spied from far;
 There ended was his quest, there ceas'd his care:
 Down he descended from his snow-soft chair,

* Composed in 1625, the 17th year of Milton's age. 'This infant was the author's neice, a daughter of his sister Philips, and probably her first child.

But all unwares with his cold-kind embrace
Unhous'd thy virgin soul from her fair biding place

IV

Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate ;
For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
Whilome did slay his dearly loved mate,
Young Hyacinth born on Eurotas' strand,
Young Hyacinth the pride of Spartan land ;
But then transform'd him to a purple flower :
Alack that so to change thee Winter had no power.

V.

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,
Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
Hid from the world in a low delved tomb ;
Could Heaven for pity thee so strictly doom ?
Oh no ! for something in thy face did shine
Above mortality, that show'd thou wast divine.

VI.

Resolve me then, oh Soul most surely bless'd,
(If so it be that thou these complaints dost hear,)
Tell me, bright Spirit, where'er thou hoverest,
Whether above that high first-moving sphere,
Or in th' Elysian fields, (if such they were,)
O say me true, if thou wert mortal wight,
And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy
flight ?

VII.

Wert thou some star which from the ruin'd roof
Of shak'd Olympus by mischance didst fall ;
Which careful Jove in nature's true behoof
Took up, and in fit place did reinstall ?
Or did of late earth's sons besiege the wall

Of sheeny Heaven, and thou, some goddess fled,
Amongst us here below to hide thy nectar'd head ?

VIII.

Or wert thou that just maid who once before
Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth,
And cam'st again to visit us once more ?
Or wert thou, [Mercy,] that sweet smiling Youth ?
Or that crown'd matron sage white-robed Truth ?

Or any other of that heavenly brood
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some
good ?

IX.

Or wert thou of the golden-winged host,
Who having clad thyself in human weed,
To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,
And after short abode fly back with speed,
As if to show what creatures Heaven doth breed ;

Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire
To scorn the sordid world, and unto Heaven aspire ?

X.

But oh ! why didst thou not stay here below
To bless us with thy heaven-lov'd innocence,
To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our foe,
To turn swift-rushing black perdition hence,
Or drive away the slaughtering pestilence,

To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart ?
But thou canst best perform that office where thou
art.

XI.

Then thou the mother of so sweet a child,
Her false imagin'd loss cease to lament,
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild ;
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
And render him with patience what he lent ;

This if thou do, he will an offering give
That till the world's last end shall make thy name to
live.

*Anno Ætatis 19. (1627.) At a Vacation Exercise in
the College, part Latin, part English. The Latin
Speeches ended, the English thus began:*

HAIL, native language, that by sinews weak
Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,
And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,
Half unpronounc'd, slide through my infant lips
Driving dumb Silence from the portal door,
Where he had mutely sat two years before ;
Here I salute thee, and thy pardon ask,
That now I use thee in my latter task :
Small loss it is that thence can come unto thee,
I know my tongue but little grace can do thee :
Thou need'st not be ambitious to be first,
Believe me I have thither pack'd the worst :
And, if it happen as I did forecast,
The daintiest dishes shall be serv'd up last.
I pray thee then deny me not thy aid
For this same small neglect that I have made :
But haste thee straight to do me once a pleasure,
And from thy wardrobe bring thy chiefest treasure
Not those new fangled toys, and trimming slight
Which takes our late fantastics with delight,
But cull those richest robes, and gay'st attire
Which deepest spirits, and choicest wits desire :
I have some naked thoughts that rove about,
And loudly knock to have their passage out ;
And weary of their place do only stay
Till thou hast deck'd them in thy best array ;
That so they may without suspect or fears
Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears.
Yet I had rather, if I were to chose,

Thy service in some graver subject use,
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,
Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound :
Such where the deep transported mind may soar
Above the wheeling poles, and at Heaven's door
Look in, and see each blissful Deity
How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,
List'ning to what unshorn Apollo sings
To th' touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings
Immortal nectar to her kingly sire ;
Then passing through the spheres of watchful fire,
And misty regions of wide air next under,
And hills of snow, and lofts of piled thunder,
May tell at length how green-ey'd Neptune raves,
In Heaven's defiance mustering all his waves ;
Then sing of secret things that came to pass
When beldam Nature in her cradle was ;
And last of kings and queens and heroes old,
Such as the wise Demodocus once told
In solemn songs at king Alcinous' feast
While sad Ulysses' soul and all the rest
Are held with his melodious harmony
In willing chains and sweet captivity;
But fie, my wand'ring Muse, how thou dost stray !
Expectance calls thee now another way ;
Thou know'st it must be now thy only bent
To keep in compass of thy predicament :
Then quick about thy purpos'd business come,
That to the next I may resign my room.

*Then Ens is represented as Father of the Predicaments
his ten Sons, whereof the eldest stood for Substance
with his Canons, which thus speaking explains :*

Good luck befriend thee, Son ; for at thy birth
The fairy ladies danc'd upon the hearth ;
Thy drowsy nurse hath sworn she did them spy
Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie,
And, sweetly singing round about thy bed,

Strow all their blessings on thy sleeping head.
 She heard them give thee this, that thou shouldst still
 From eyes of mortals walk invisible ;
 Yet there is something that doth force my fear,
 For once it was my dismal hap to hear
 A Sibyl old, bow-bent with crooked age,
 That far events full wisely could presage,
 And in time's long and dark prospective glass
 Foresaw what future 7ays should bring to pass :
 Your son, said she, (nor can you it prevent,)
 Shall subject be to many an accident.
 O'er all his brethren he shall reign as king,
 Yet every one shall make him underling,
 And those that cannot live from him assunder
 Ungratefully shall strive to keep him under,
 In worth and excellence he shall out-go them,
 Yet being above them, he shall be below them ;
 From others he shall stand in need of nothing,
 Yet on his brothers shall depend for clothing ;
 To find a foe it shall not be his hap,
 And Peace shall lull him in her flowery lap ;
 Yet shall he live in strife, and at his door
 Devouring War shall never cease to roar ;
 Yea it shall be his natural property
 To harbour those that are at enmity.
 What power, what force, what mighty spell, if not
 Your learned hands, can loose this Gordian knot ?

*The next Quantity and Quality spake in Prose ; then
 Relation was called by his Name.*

Rivers, arise ; whether thou be the son
 Of utmost Tweed, or Oose, or gulfy Don,
 Or Trent, who like some earth-born giant spreads
 His thirty arms along th' indented meads ;
 Or sullen Mole, that runneth underneath
 Or Severn swift, guilty of maidens' death ;
 Or rocky Avon, or of sedgy Lee,
 Or coaly Tine, or ancient hallow'd Dee ;

Or Humber loud, that keeps the Scythian's name,
Or Meday smooth, or royal tower'd Thame.

[*The rest was prose*]

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

Composed in 1629.

I.

This is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heaven's eternal King,
Of wedded Maid, and Virgin-Mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing,

That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

II.

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
Wherewith he went at Heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal-Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

III.

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
To welcome him to this his new abode,
Now while the Heaven by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons
bright?

IV.

See how from far upon the eastern road
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet ;
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode,
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet ;
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the Angel choir,
From out his secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire.

THE HYMN.

I.

It was the winter wild,
While the Heaven-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies ,
Nature in awe to him
Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize ;
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

II.

Only, with speeches fair,
She woes the gentle air,
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow ;
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw ;
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

III.

But he her fears to cease
Sent down the meek-ey'd Peace ;
She, crown'd with olive green, came softly-sliding,
O*

Down through the turning sphere
His ready harbinger,

With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing,
And waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes an universal peace through sea and land.

IV.

No war, or battle's sound
Was heard the world around,

The idle spear and shield were high up hung ;
The hooked chariot stood
Unstain'd with hostile blood ;

The trumpet spake not to the arm'd throng ;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sov'reign Lord was by.

V.

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of Light

His reign of peace upon the earth began :
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kiss'd,

Whisp'ring new joys to the mild ocean ;
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

VI.

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fix'd in steadfast gaze,

Bending one way their precious influence,
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,

Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence ;
But in their glimering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

VII.

And though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,

The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hide his head for shame,
As his inferior flame

The new enlighten'd world no more should need ;
He saw a greater Sun appear
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could
bear.

VIII.

The shepherds on the lawn.
Or ere the point of dawn,

Sat simply chatting in a rustic row ;
Full little thought they then,
That the mighty Pan

Was kindly come to live with them below :
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

IX.

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,

As never was by mortal finger strook ;
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringed noise,

As all their souls in blissful rapture took :
The air, such pleasures loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly
close.

X.

Nature that heard such sound,
Beneath the hollow round

Of Cynthia's seat, the airy region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,

And that her reign had here its last fulfilling ;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all Heaven and Earth in happier union.

XI.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shame-fac'd night ar
ray'd ;
The helmed Cherubim,
And sworded Seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,
Harping in loud and solemn choir,
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born
Heir.

XII.

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellation set,
And the well-balanc'd world on hinges hung,
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltring waves their oozy channel keep.

XIII.

Ring out, ye crystal Spheres,
Once bless our human ears,
(If ye have power to touch our senses so,)
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time ;
And let the base of Heaven's deep organ blow ;
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full concert to th' angelic symphony.

XIV.

For if such holy song
Inwrap our fancy long,

Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold ;
And speckled Vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould
And Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day

XV.

Yea Truth and Justice then,
Will down return to men,
Orb'd in a rainbow ; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between,
Thron'd in celestial sheen,
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering.
And Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

XVI.

But wisest fate says no,
This must not yet be so,
The Babe lies yet in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss ;
So both himself and us to glorify :
Yet first, to those ychain'd in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through
the deep,

XVII.

With such a horrid clang
As on mount Sinai rang,
While the red fire and smouldering clouds out brake
The aged earth aghast,
With terror of that blast,
Shall from the surface to the centre shake ;
When at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his
throne.

XVIII.

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
But now begins ; for from this happy day
Th' old Dragon under ground
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far cast his usurped sway,
And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

XI.

The oracles are dumb,
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
Inspires the pale-ey'd priest from the prophetic cell.

XX.

The lonely mountains o'er
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard and loud lament ;
From haunted spring and dale,
Edg'd with poplar pale,
The parting Genius is with sighing sent :
With flower-inwoven tresses torn,
The Nymphs, in twilight shade of tangled thickets,
mourn.

XXI.

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
The Lares and Lemures moan with midnight plaint ;
In urns and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint ;

And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat.

XXII.

Peor and Baalim
Forsake their temples dim
 With that twice-batter'd god of Palestine ;
And mooned Ashtaroth,
Heaven's queen and mother both,
 Now sits not girt with tapers holy shine ;
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn,
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz
 mourn.

XXIII.

And sullen Moloch fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
 His burning idol all of blackest hue ;
In vain with cymbals ring,
They call the grisly king,
 In dismal dance about the furnace blue :
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

XXIV.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green,
 Trampling the unshower'd grass with lowings loud :
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest,
 Naught but profoundest Hell can be his shroud ;
In vain with timbrel'd anthems dark
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipp'd ark.

XXV.

He feels from Judah's land
The dreaded Infant's hand,
 The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyne ;

Nor all the gods besides,
Longer dare abide,
Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine :
Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,
Can in his swaddling bands control the damned crew.

XXVI.

So when the sun in bed,
Curtain'd with cloudy red,
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to th' infernal jail,
Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave ;
And the yellow-skirted fays
Fly after the night steeds, leaving their moon-lov'd
maze.

XXVII.

But see, the Virgin-bless'd
Hath laid her Babe to rest.
Time is, our tedious song should here have ending :
Heaven's youngest-teemed star
Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending :
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harness'd angels sit in order serviceable.

THE PASSION.*

I.

EREWHILE of music, and ethereal mirth,
Wherewith the stage of air and earth did ring,
And joyous news of Heavenly Infant's birth,

* This poem appears to have been composed soon after the Ode on the Nativity.

My Muse with Angels did divide to sing ;
 But headlong joy is ever on the wing,
 In wintry solstice like the shorten'd light
 Soon swallow'd up in dark, and long out-living night.

II.

For now to sorrow must I tune my song,
 And set my harp to notes of saddest wo,
 Which on our dearest Lord did seize ere long,
 Dangers, and snares, and wrongs, and worse than so,
 Which he for us did freely undergo :
 Most perfect Hero, tried in heaviest plight
 Of labours huge and hard, too hard for human weight !

III.

He, sovereign Priest, stooping his regal head,
 That droop'd with odorous oil down his fair eyes,
 Poor fleshly tabernacle enter'd
 His starry front low-roof'd beneath the skies ;
 O, what a mask was there, what a disguise !
 Yet more ; the stroke of death he must abide,
 Then lies him meekly down fast by his brethren's side

IV.

These latest scenes confine my roving verse ;
 To this horizon is my Phœbus bound :
 His godlike acts, and his temptations fierce,
 And former sufferings, other where are found ;
 Loud o'er the rest Cremonas' trump doth sound ;
 Me softer airs befit, and softer strings
 Of lute or viol still, more apt for mournful things.

V.

Befriend me, Night, best patroness of grief ;
 Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw,
 And work my flatter'd fancy to belief,
 That Heaven and Earth are colour'd with my wo ;
 My sorrows are too dark for day to know :

The leaves should all be black whereon I write,
And letters, where my tears have wash'd, a wannish
white.

VI.

See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,
That whirl'd the Prophet up at Chebar flood ;
My spirit some transporting Cherub feels,
To bear me where the towers of Salem stood,
Once glorious towers, now sunk in guiltless blood :
There doth my soul in holy vision sit,
In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstatic fit.

VII.

Mine eye hath found that sad sepulchral rock
That was the casket of Heaven's richest store ;
And here though grief my feeble hands up lock,
Yet on the soften'd quarry would I score
My plaining verse as lively as before :
For sure so well instructed are my tears,
That they would fitly fall in order'd characters.

VIII.

Or should I thence hurried on viewless wing,
Take up a weeping on the mountains wild,
The gentle neighbourhood of grove and spring
Would soon unbosom all their echoes mild,
And I (for grief is easily beguil'd)
Might think th' infection of my sorrows loud
Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant cloud.

This subject the Author finding to be above th
years he had, when he wrote it, and nothing satisfied
with what was begun, left it unfinished.

ON TIME.*

FLy, envious Time, till thou run out thy race ;
 Call on the lazy, leaden-stepping hours,
 Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace ;
 And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
 Which is no more than is false and vain,
 And merely mortal dross ;
 So little is our loss,
 So little is thy gain !
 For when as each thing bad thou hast entomb'd,
 And last of all thy greedy self consum'd,
 Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss
 With an individual kiss ;
 And Joy shall overtake us as a flood,
 When every thing that is sincerely good
 And perfectly divine,
 With Truth, and Peace, and Love, shall ever shine
 About the supreme throne
 Of Him, to whose happy-making sight alone
 When once our heavenly guided souls shall climb,
 Then, all this earthly grossness quit,
 Attir'd with stars, we shall for ever sit,
 Triumphant over Death, and Chance, and thee, O
 Time !

UPON THE CIRCUMCISION.

YE flaming Powers, and winged warriors bright,
 That erst with music, and triumphant song,
 First heard by happy watchful shepherds' ear,
 So sweetly sung your joy the clouds along
 Through the soft silence of the list'ning night ;

* In these poems where no date is prefixed, and no circumstances direct us to ascertain the time when they were composed, we follow the order of Milton's own editions. And before this copy of verses it appears, from the manuscript, that the poet had written, *To be set on a clock-case.*

Now mourn ; and, if sad share with us to bear
Your fiery essence can distil no tear,
Burn in your sighs, and borrow
Seas wept from our deep sorrow.

He, who with all Heaven's heraldry whilere
Enter'd the world, now bleeds to give us ease ;
Alas, how soon our sin

Sore doth begin

His infancy to seize !

O more exceeding love, or law more just !
Just law indeed, but more exceeding love !
For we, by rightful doom remediless,
Were lost in death, till he, that dwelt above
High thron'd in secret bliss, for us frail dust
Emptied his glory, ev'n to nakedness ;
And that great covenant which we still transgress
Entirely satisfied ;
And the full wrath beside
Of vengeful justice bore for our excess ;
And seals obedience first, with wounding smart,
This day ; but O, ere long,
Huge pangs and strong
Will pierce more near his heart.

AT A SOLEMN MUSIC.

BLESS'D pair of Syrens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
Sphere-born, harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd power employ
Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce ;
And to our high rais'd phantasy present
That undisturbed song of pure content,
Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne,
To him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee,
Where the bright Seraphim, in burning row,
Their loud, up-liften angel-trumpets blow,
And the cherubic host, in thousand choir,

Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
 With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
 Hymns devout and holy psalms
 Singing everlastingly :
 That we on earth, with undiscording voice,
 May rightly answer that melodious noise :
 As once we did ; till disproportion'd sin
 Jarr'd against Nature's chime, and with harsh din
 Broke the fair music that all creatures made
 To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd
 In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
 In first obedience, and their state of good.
 O, may we soon again renew that song,
 And keep in tune with heaven, till God, ere long,
 To his celestial concert us unite,
 To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light !

AN EPITAPH ON THE MARCHIONESS OF WINCHESTER.*

THIS rich marble doth inter
 The honour'd wife of Winchester,
 A Viscount's daughter, an Earl's heir,
 Besides what her virtues fair
 Added to her noble birth,
 More than she could own from earth.
 Summers three times eight save one
 She had told ; alas ! too soon,
 After so short time of breath,
 To house with darkness, and with death.
 Yet had the number of her days

* This Lady was Jane, daughter of Thomas Lord Visc. Savage of Rock-Savage, Cheshire, who by marriage became the heir of Lord Darcy, Earl of Rivers ; and was the wife of John Marquis of Winchester, and the mother of Charles first duke of Bolton. She died in childbed of a second son in the 23d year of her age ; and Milton made these verses at Cambridge, as appears by the sequel.

Been as complete as was her praise,
Nature and Fate had had no strife
In giving limit to her life.

Her high birth, and her graces sweet,
Quickly found a lover meet ;
The virgin choir for her request
The God that sits at marriage feast ;
He at their invoking came,
But with a scarce well-lighted flame ;
And in his garland, as he stood,
Ye might discern a cypress bud.
Once had the early matrons run
To greet her of a lovely son,
And now with second hope she goes,
And calls Lucina to her throes ;
But, whether by mischance or blame,
Atropos for Lucina came ;
And, with remorseless cruelty,
Spoil'd at once both fruit and tree ;
The hapless babe, before his birth,
Had burial, yet not laid in earth ;
And the languish'd mother's womb
Was not long a living tomb.

So have I seen some tender slip,
Sav'd with care from winter's nip ;
The pride of her carnation train
Pluck'd up by some unheedy swain,
Who only thought to crop the flower
New shot up from vernal shower ;
But the fair blossom hangs the head
Side-ways, as on a dying bed,
And those pearls of dew she wears,
Prove to be presaging tears,
Which the sad morn had let fall
On her hast'ning funeral.

Gentle Lady, may thy grave
Peace and quiet ever have,
After this thy travail sore
Sweet rest seize thee evermore,

That to give the world increase,
Shorten'd haste thy own life's lease.
Here, besides the sorrowing
That thy noble house doth bring,
Here be tears of perfect moan
Wept for thee in Helicon ;
And some flowers, and some bays
For thy hearse to strew the ways,
Sent thee from the banks of Came,
Devoted to thy virtuous name ;
Whilst thou, bright Saint, high sitt'st in glory,
Next her, much like to thee in story,
That fair Syrian Shepherdess,
Who, after years of barrenness,
The highly favour'd Joseph bore
To him that serv'd for her before,
And at her birth, much like thee,
Through pangs fled to felicity,
Far within the bosom bright
Of blazing Majesty and Light :
There with thee, new welcome Saint,
Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,
With thee there clad in radiant sheen,
No Marchioness, but now a queen.

SONG.—ON MAY MORNING.

Now the bright Morning-star, day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip, and the pale primrose.
Hail, bounteous May, thou dost inspire
Mirth, and youth, and warm desire ;
Woods, and groves are of thy dressing,
Hill, and dale doth boast thy blessing.
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

ON SHAKSPEARE. 1630.

WHAT needs my Shakspeare, for his honour'd bones,
 The labour of an age in piled stones?
 Or that his hallow'd relics should be hid
 Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
 Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
 What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?
 Thou in our wonder and astonishment
 Hast built thyself a live-long monument.
 For whilst, to th' shame of slow endeavoring art,
 Thy easy numbers flow; and that each heart
 Hath, from the leaves of thy unvalued book,
 Those Delphic lines with deep impression took,
 Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
 Dost make us marble with too much conceiving,
 And, so sepulchred, in such pomp dost lie,
 That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

ON THE UNIVERSITY CARRIER,

*Who sickened in the time of his vacancy; being forbid to go to London, by reason of the plague.**

Here lies old Hobson; Death hath broke his girt,
 And, here, alas! hath lain him in the dirt;
 Or else the ways being foul, twenty to one,
 He's here stuck in a slough and overthrown.
 'Twas such a shifter, that, if truth were known,
 Death was half glad when he had got him down;
 For he had, any time this ten years full,

* We have the following account of this extraordinary man in the Spectator, No. 509. "Mr. Tobias Hobson was a carrier, and the first man in this island who let out hackney-horses. He lived in Cambridge; and observing that the scholars rid hard, his manner was, to keep a large stable of horses, with boots, bridles, and

Dodg'd with him, betwixt Cambridge and the Bull.
 And surely Death could never have prevail'd,
 Had not his weekly course of carriage fail'd ;
 But lately finding him so long at home,
 And thinking now his journey's end was come,
 And that he had ta'en up his latest inn ;
 In the kind office of a chamberlain
 Show'd him his room where he must lodge that night,
 Pull'd off his boots, and took away the light :
 If any ask for him, it shall be said,
 Hobson has supp'd, and's newly gone to bed.

ANOTHER ON THE SAME.

HERE lieth one, who did most truly prove
 That he could never die, while he could move ;
 So hung his destiny, never to rot
 While he might still jog on and keep his trot,
 Made of sphere-metal, never to decay
 Until his revolution was at stay.
 Time numbers motion, yet (without a crime
 'Gainst old truth) motion number'd out his time :
 And, like an engine mov'd with wheel and weight
 His principles being ceas'd, he ended straight.

whips, to furnish the gentlemen at once, without going from college to college to borrow, as they have done since the death of this worthy man : I say, Mr. Hobson kept a stable of forty good cattle, always ready and fit for travelling : but when a man came for horse, he was led into the stable, where there was great choice ; ut he obliged him to take the horse which stood next to the stable-door, so that every customer was alike well served, according his chance, and every horse ridden with the same justice. From whence it became a proverb, when what ought to be your election was forced upon you, to say *Hobson's choice*. This memorable man stands drawn in fresco at an inn (which he used) in Bishops-gate-street, with a hundred pound bag under his arm, with this inscription upon the said bag :

The fruitful mother of a hundred more."

Rest, that gives all men life, gave him his death
 And too much breathing put him out of breath :
 Nor were it contradiction to affirm,
 Too long vacation hasten'd on his term.
 Merely to drive the time away he sicken'd,
 Fainted, and died, nor would with ale be quicken'd
 Nay, quoth he, on his swooning bed out-stretch'd
 If I may'nt carry, sure I'll ne'er be fetch'd,
 But vow, though the cross docters all stood hearers,
 For one carrier put down to make to make six bear-
 ers.

Ease was his chief disease ; and, to judge right,
 He died for heaviness that his cart went light ;
 His leisure told him that his time was come,
 And lack of load made his life burdensome,
 That even to his last breath, (there be that say't,)
 As he were press'd to death, he cried, More weight ;
 But, had his doings lasted as they were,
 He had been an immortal carrier.
 Obedient to the moon he spent his date,
 In course reciprocal, and had his fate
 Link'd to the mutual flowing of the seas
 Yet (strange to think) his *wain* was his *increase* :
 His letters are deliver'd all and gone,
 Only remains this superscription.

ARCADES.*

*Part of an Entertainment presented to the Countess
 Dowager of Derby at Harefield, by some noble persons
 of her family, who appear on the scene in pastoral habit
 moving toward the seat of state, with this Song.*

I. SONG.

Look, Nymphs and Shepherds, look,
 What sudden blaze of majesty

* This poem is only part of an Entertainment, or Mask. the rest

Is that which we from hence descry,
Too divine to be mistook :

This, this is she

To whom our vows and wishes bend :

Here our solemn search hath end.

Fame, that, her high worth to raise

Seem'd erst so lavish and profuse,

We may justly now accuse

Of detraction from her praise ;

Less than half we find express'd,

Envy bid conceal the rest.

Mark, what radiant state she spreads,

In circle round her shining throne,

Shooting her beams like silver threads ;

This, this is she alone,

Sitting like a goddess bright,

In the centre of her light.

Might she the wise Latona be,

Or the tower'd Cybele,

Mother of a hundred gods ;

Juno dares not give her odds :

Who had thought this clime had held

A deity so unparallel'd ?

probably being of a different nature, or composed by a different hand. This Countess Dowager of Derby to whom it was presented, must have been Alice, daughter of Sir John Spencer of Althorp, Northamptonshire, and widow of Ferdinando Stanley, the fifth Earl of Derby. And as Harefield is in Middlesex, and, according to Camden, lieth a little to the north of Uxbridge, we may conclude, that Milton made this poem while he resided in that neighbourhood with his father at Horton near Colebrooke. It should seem too, that it was made before the mask at Ludlow, as it is a more imperfect essay. And Frances, the second daughter of this Countess Dowager of Derby, being married to John Earl of Bridgewater, before whom was presented the Mask at Ludlow, we may conceive in some measure how Milton was induced to compose the one after the other. The alliance between the families naturally and easily accounts for it : and in all probability, the Genius of the wood in this poem, as well as the attendant Spirit in the Mask, was Mr. Henry Lawes, who was the great master of music at that time, and taught most of the young nobility.

*As they come forward, the Genius of the Wood appears,
and turning towards them, speaks.*

GENIUS.

STAY, gentle Swains ; for, though in this disguise
I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes ;
Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung
Of that renowned flood, so often sung ;
Divine Alpheus, who by secret sluice
Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse ;
And ye, the breathing roses of the wood,
Fair, silver-buskin'd Nymphs, as great and good ;
I know, this quest of yours, and free intent,
Was all in honour and devotion meant
To the great mistress of yon princely shrine,
Whom with low reverence I adore as mine ;
And with all helpful service will comply,
To further this night's glad solemnity ;
And lead ye, where ye may more near behold
What shallow-searching Fame hath left untold ,
Which I full oft, amidst these shades alone,
Have sat to wonder at, and gaze upon :
For know, by lot from Jove, I am the Power
Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower,
To nurse the saplings tall, and curl the grove
With ringlets quaint, and wanton windings wove
And all my plants I save from nightly ill
Of noisome winds, and blasting vapours chill :
And from the boughs brush off the evil dew,
And heal the arms of thwarting thunder blue,
Or what the cross, dire-looking planet smites,
Or hurtful worm with canker'd venom bites.
When evening gray doth rise, I fetch my round,
Over the mount, and all this hallow'd ground,
And early, ere the odourous breath of morn
Awakes the slumb'ring leaves, or tassell'd horn
Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
Number my ranks, and visit every sprout

With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless :
 But else in deep of night when drowsiness
 Hath lock'd up mortal sense, then listen I
 To the celestial Syrens' harmony,
 That sit upon the ninefolded spheres,
 And sing to those that hold the vital shears ;
 And turn the adamantine spindle round,
 On which the fate of Gods and Men is wound.
 Such sweet compulsion doth in music lie,
 To lull the daughters of Necessity,
 And keep unsteady Nature to her law,
 And the low world in measur'd motion draw
 After the heavenly tune, which none can hear
 Of human mould with gross unpurged ear ;
 And yet such music worthiest were to blaze
 The peerless height of her immortal praise,
 Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit,
 If my inferior hand or voice could hit
 Inimitable sounds : yet, as we go,
 Whate'er the skill of lesser gods can show,
 I will assay her worth to celebrate,
 And so attend ye toward her glittering state ;
 Where ye may all, that are of noble stem,
 Approach, and kiss her sacred vesture's hem.

II. SONG.

O'er the smooth enamell'd green
 Where no print of step hath been,
 Follow me, as I sing
 And touch the warbled string,
 Under the shady roof
 Of branching elm star-proof.
 Follow me ;
 I will bring you where she sits,
 Clad in splendour, as befits
 Her deity.
 Such a rural Queen
 All Arcadia hath not seen.

III. SONG.

Nymphs and Shepherds, dance no more
 By sandy Ladon's liliéd banks ;
 On old Lycæus, or Cyllene hoar,
 Trip no more in twilight ranks ;
 Though Erymanth your loss deplore,
 A better soil shall give ye thanks.
 From the stony Mænalus
 Bring your flocks, and live with us ;
 Here ye shall have greater grace,
 To serve the Lady of this place.
 Though Syrinx your Pan's mistress were,
 Yet Syrinx well might wait on her.
 Such a rural Queen
 All Arcadia hath not seen.

 LYCIDA S.*

In this Monody, the author bewails a learned friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish seas, 1637: and by occasion foretells the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their height.

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more
 Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
 I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude ;
 And, with forc'd fingers rude,
 Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year :
 Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,

* This poem was made upon the unfortunate and untimely death of Mr. Edward King, son of Sir John King, Secretary for Ireland, a fellow collegian and intimate friend of Milton, who, as he was going to visit his relations in Ireland was drowned, Aug. 10, 1637, in the 25th year of his age. This poem is with great judgment made of the pastoral kind, as both Mr. King and Milton had been designed for holy orders and the pastoral care, which gives a peculiar propriety to several passages in it.

Compels me to disturb your season due :
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer :
Who would not sing for Lycidas ? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his wat'ry bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well,
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring ;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse :
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destin'd urn,
And, as he passes, turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud :
For we were nurs'd upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft, till the star that rose at evening, bright,
Toward Heaven's descent had slop'd his west'ring
wheel.

Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Temper'd to th' oaten flute ;
Rough Satyrs danc'd, and Fawns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long ;
And old Damœtas lov'd to hear our song.

But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return !
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn :
The willows, and hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen,
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.

As killing as the canker to the rose,
 Or taint-worm to the weanling-herds that graze,
 Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
 When first the white-thorn blow ;
 Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless
 deep

Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas ?
 For neither were ye playing on the steep,
 Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
 Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
 Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream :
 Ay me ! I fondly dream !
 Had ye been there—for what could that have done ?
 What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
 The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
 Whom universal Nature did lament,
 When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
 His gory visage down the stream was sent,
 Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore ?

Alas ! what boots it with incessant care
 To tend the homely, slighted shepherd's trade,
 And strictly meditate the thankless Muse ?
 Were it not better done, as other use,
 To sport with Amarylis in the shade,
 Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair,
 Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise,
 (That last infirmity of noble mind,)
 To scorn delights, and live laborious day ;
 But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
 And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
 Comes to blind Fury with th' abhorred shears,
 And slits the thin-spun life. But not the praise,
 Phœbus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears ;
 Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
 Nor in the glist'ring foil,
 Set off to the world, nor in broad rumor lies ;
 But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
 And perfect witness of all-judging Jove

As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
 Of so much fame in Heaven expect thy meed
 O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood,
 Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds,
 That strain I heard was of a higher mood :
 But now my oat proceeds,
 And listens to the herald of the sea
 That came in Neptune's plea ;
 He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
 What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain ?
 And question'd every gust of rugged winds,
 That blows from off each beaked promontory :
 They knew not of his story ;
 And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
 That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd,
 The air was calm, and on the level brine
 Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.
 It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
 Built in th' eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,
 That sank so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow
 His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
 Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
 Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with wo.
 Ah ! who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge ?
 Last came, and last did go,
 The pilot of the Galilean lake ;
 Two massy keys he bore of metals twain,
 (The golden opes, the iron shuts amain,)
 He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake ;
 How well could I have spar'd for thee, young swain,
 Enow of such, as for their bellies' sake
 Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold ?
 Of other care they little reck'ning make,
 Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
 And shove away the worthy bidden guest ;
 Blind mouths ! that scarce themselves know how to
 hold
 A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least

That to the faithful herdsman's art belongs ;
What reck's it them ? What need they ? They are
 sped ;

And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw ;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread :
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said :
But that two handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.

Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams ; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart-star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamell'd eyes,
That on the green-turf suck the honied showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies.
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well attir'd woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears :
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the Laureate hearse where Lyciad lies.
For, so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ay me ! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world ;

Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great Vision of the guarded Mount,
Looks tow'rd Namancos and Bayona's hold ;
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth ;
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor ;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky ;
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walk'd the waves
Where other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears th' unexpressive nuptial song,
In the bless'd kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That, singing, in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more ;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray,
He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay :
And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
And now was dropp'd into the western bay ;
At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue :
To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new.

ON THE NEW FORCERS OF CONSCIENCE UNDER THE LONG PARLIAMENT.*

BECAUSE you have thrown off your Prelate-Lord,
 And with stiff vow renounc'd his Liturgy,
 To seize the widow'd whore Plurality
 From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorr'd ;
 Dare ye for this abjure the civil sword
 To force our consciences that Christ set free
 And ride us with a classic hierarchy,†
 Taught ye by mere A. S. and Rotherford ‡
 Men whose life, learning, faith and pure intent,
 Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,
 Must now be named and printed Heretics
 By shallow Edwards§ and scotch what d'ye call :||
 But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
 Your blots and packing worse than those of Trent
 That so the parliament
 May, with their wholesome and preventive shears,
 Clip your phylacteries, though balk your ears,
 And succour our just fears,
 When they shall read this clearly in your charge,
 New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large.

* This poem is supposed to have been made when the Directory was established, and disputes ran high between the Presbyterians and Independents in 1645, the latter pleading for a toleration, and the former against it.

† In the Presbyterian form of government there are congregational, classical, provincial, and national assemblies.

‡ It is not known who is meant by A. S. Mr. Samuel Rotherford was Professor of Divinity at St. Andrew's, and one of the Scotch commissioners to the Westminster assembly.

§ Mr. Thomas Edwards, author of the *Gangræna*.

|| Either Mr. Alexander Henderson or Mr. George Gillespie, both commissioners to the Westminster assembly.

THE FIFTH ODE OF HORACE, Lib. I.

Quis multa gracilis te puer in rosa, rendered almost word for word without rhyme, according to the Latin measure, as near as the language will permit

WHAT slender youth, bedew'd with liquid odours,
Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave,
Pyrrha? for whom bind'st thou
In wreaths thy golden hair,

Plain in thy neatness? O, how oft shall he
On faith and changed gods complain, and seas
Rough with black winds, and storms
Unwonted shall admire!

Who now enjoys thee credulous, all gold,
Who always vacant, always amiable
Hopes thee, of flattering gales
Unmindful. Hapless they

To whom thou untried seem'st fair! Me, in my
vow'd

Picture, the sacred wall declares to have hung
My dank and dropping weeds
To the stern god of sea.



SONNETS.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

O NIGHTINGALE, that on yon bloomy spray
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still;
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
While the jolly Hours lead on propitious May.
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
Portend success in love; O, if Jove's will
Have link'd that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Foretel my hopeless doom, in some grove nigh;
As thou, from year to year, hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why:
Whether the Muse, or Love, call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I

ON HIS BEING ARRIVED TO THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stol'n on his wing my three-and-twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arriv'd so near;
And inward ripeness doth much less appear
That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.

Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
 It shall be still in strictest measure even
 To that same lot, however mean or high,
 Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Hea-
 ven;
 All is, if I have grace to use it so,
 As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY.*

CAPTAIN, or Colonel, or Knight in arms
 Whose chance on these defenceless door may
 seize,
 If deed of honour did thee ever please,
 Guard them, and him within protect from harms:
 He can requite thee; for he knows the charms
 That call Fame on such gentle acts as these,
 And he can spread thy name o'er land and seas,
 What ever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
 Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower:
 The great Emathian conquerer bid spare
 The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
 Went to the ground; and the repeated air
 Of sad Electra's poet had the power
 To save th' Athenian walls from ruin bare.

TO A VIRTUOUS YOUNG LADY.

LADY, that in the prime of earliest youth
 Wisely hast shunn'd the broad way and the green,

* In the manuscript after the title, is added 1642. It was in November of that year that the King marched with his army as near as Brentford, and put the city in great consternation.

And with those few art eminently seen,
 That labour up the hill of heavenly truth ;
 The better part with Mary and with Ruth
 Chosen thou hast ; and they that overween,
 And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,
 No anger find in thee but pity and ruth.
 Thy care is fix'd, and zealously attends
 To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light,
 And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure
 Thou, when the Bridegroom, with his feastful friends
 Passes to bliss, at the mid hour of night,
 Hast gain'd thy entrance, Virgin wise and pure.

TO THE LADY MARGARET LEY.*

DAUGHTER to that good Earl, once President
 Of England's Council, and her Treasury,
 Who liv'd in both, unstain'd with gold or fee,
 And left them both, more in himself content,
 Till the sad breaking of that Parliament
 Broke him, as that dishonest victory
 At Chæronea fatal to liberty,
 Kill'd with report that old man eloquent.
 Though later born than to have known the days

* We have given the title which is in Milton's Manuscript, *To the Lady Margaret Ley*. She was the daughter of Sir James Ley, whose singular learning and abilities raised him through all the great posts of the law, till he came to be made Earl of Marlborough, and Lord High Treasurer, and Lord President of the Council to King James I. He died in an advanced age, and Milton attributes his death to the breaking of the parliament ; and it is true that the parliament was dissolved the 10th of March, 1628-9, and he died on the 14th of the same month. He left several sons and daughters ; and the Lady Margaret was married to Captain Hobson, of the Isle of Wight. It appears from the accounts of Milton's life, that in the year 1643 he used frequently to visit this lady and her husband, and about that time we may suppose this sonnet was composed.

Wherein your father flourish'd, yet by you,
 Madam, methinks I see him living yet;
 So well your words his noble virtues praise,
 That all both judge you to relate them true,
 And to possess them, honour'd Margaret.

*On the Detraction which followed upon the writing
 certain Treatises.**

A BOOK was writ of late call'd Tetrachordon,
 And woven close, both matter, form, and style;
 The subject new: it walk'd the town awhile,
 Numb'ring good intellects; now seldom por'd on.
 Cries the stall reader, Bless us! what a word on
 A title page is this! and some in file
 Stand spelling false, while one might walk to Mile-
 End Green. Why is it harder, Sirs, than Gordon,
 Colkitto, or Macdonnel, or Galasp?†
 Those rugged names to our like mouths grow
 sleek,
 That would have made Quintillian stare and gasp;
 Thy age, like ours O soul of Sir John Cheek,‡

* When Milton published his book of Divorce, he was greatly condemned by the Presbyterian ministers, whose advocate and champion he had been before. He published his *Tetrachordon*, or *Expositions upon the four chief places in Scripture, which treat of marriage, or nullities in marriage*, in 1645.

† "We may suppose, (says Dr. Newton,) that these were persons of note and eminence among the Scotch ministers who were for pressing and enforcing the covenant." Mr. George Gillespie, here wrongously named *Galasp*, was one of the Scotch commissioners to the Westminster assembly. But who the other persons were is not known. It appears from this sonnet, and the verses *on the forcers of conscience*, that Milton treats the Presbyterians with great contempt.

‡ This Gentleman was the first Professor of the Greek tongue in the university of Cambridge, and was highly instrumental in bringing that language into repute. He was afterwards made one of the tutors to Edward VI.

Hated not learning worse than toad or asp,
 When thou taught'st Cambridge, and king Edward,
 Greek.

ON THE SAME.

I DID but prompt the age to quit their clogs
 By the known rules of ancient liberty,
 When straight a barbarous noise environs me
 Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes and dogs:
 As when those hinds that were transform'd to frogs,
 Rail'd at Latona's twin-born progeny,
 Which after held the sun and moon in fee.
 But this is got by casting pearl to hogs;
 That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
 And still revolt when truth would set them free
 License they mean when they cry Liberty;
 For who loves that, must first be wise and good:
 But from that mark how far they rove we see,
 For all this waste of wealth, and loss of blood.

TO MR. H. LAWES, ON HIS AIRS, 1645.*

HARRY, whose tuneful and well-measur'd song
 First taught our English music how to span
 Words with just note and accent not to scan
 With Midas' ears, committing short and long;
 Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,
 With praise enough for Envy to look wan;
 To after age thou shalt be writ the man,
 That with smooth air could humour best our tongue.
 Thou honour'st verse, and verse must lend her wing

* This Mr. Henry Lawes was a gentleman of the king's chapel, and one of his band of music, and an intimate friend of Milton.

To honour thee, the priest of Phœbus' choir,
 That tun'st their happiest lines in hymn, or story.
 Dante shall give fame leave to set thee higher
 Than his Casella, whom he woo'd to sing,
 Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.

*On the religious memory of Mrs. Catharine Thomson,
 my Christian Friend, deceased 16th of December,
 1646.**

WHEN faith and love, which parted from thee never,
 Had ripen'd thy just soul to dwell with God,
 Meekly thou didst resign this earthly load
 Of death, call'd life; which us from life doth sever.
 Thy works, and alms, and all thy good endeavour,
 Stay'd not behind, nor in the grave were trod :
 But, as Faith pointed with her golden rod,
 Follow'd thee up to joy and bliss for ever.
 Love led them on, and faith who knew them best
 Thy hand-maids, clad them o'er with purple
 beams
 And azure wings, that up they flew so dress'd
 And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes
 Before the Judge : who thenceforth bid thee rest,
 And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

TO THE LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX.†

FAIRFAX, whose name in arms through Europe rings
 Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,

* "Who this Mrs. Thomson was, (says Dr. Newton,) we can not be certain ; but I find in the accounts of Milton's life, that when he was first made Latin Secretary, he lodged at one Thomson's, next door to the Bull-head tavern at Charing-cross. This Mrs. Thomson, therefore, was, in all probability, one of that family."

† This sonnet appears, from the manuscript, to have been ad

And all her jealous monarchs with amaze
 And rumours loud, that daunt remotest kings;
 Thy firm, unshaken virtue, ever brings
 Victory home, though new rebellions raise
 Their Hydra heads, and the false North displays
 Her broken league, to imp their Serpent wings.
 O yet a nobler task awaits thy hand,
 (For what can war but endless war still breed ?)
 Till truth and right from violence be freed,
 And public faith clear'd from the shameful brand
 Of public fraud. In vain doth valour bleed,
 While Avarice and Rapine share the land.

TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.*

CROMWELL, our chief of men who through a cloud
 Not of war only, but detractions rude,
 Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
 To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed.
 And on the neck of crown'd fortune proud
 Hast rear'd God's trophies, and his works pursued,
 While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots im-
 bru'd,
 And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
 And Worcester's laureate wreath. Yet much remains
 To conquer still; Peace hath her victories
 No less renown'd than War: new foes arise
 Threat'ning to bind our souls with secular chains:
 Help us to save free conscience from the paw
 Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.

sed to Gen. Fairfax at the siege of Colchester, which was cap-
 on in the summer of 1648.

In the Author's manuscript is this incscription: *To the Lord
 eral Cromwell, May 1652. On the proposals of certain
 isters at the committee for propagation of the Gospel.*

TO SIR HENRY VANE THE YOUNGER.

Vane, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
 Than whom a better Senator ne'er held
 The helm of Rome, when gowns, not arms, repell'd
 The fierce Epirot, and th' African bold,
 Whether to settle peace, or to unfold
 The drift of hollow states hard to be spell'd :
 Then to advise how War may, best upheld,
 Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
 In all her equipage ; besides to know
 Both spiritual power and civil, what each means,
 What severs each, thou hast learn'd which few
 have done :
 The bounds of either sword to thee we owe ;
 Therefore on thy firm hand religion leans
 In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN
PIEDMONT.*

AVENGE, O Lord thy slaughter'd saints, whose
 bones

* This persecution of the Protestants in Peidmont broke out in 1655. In May, that year, Cromwell wrote several letters to the Duke of Savoy, and other potentates and states complaining of that persecution. Echard tells us, that he proclaimed a fast, and caused large contributions to be gathered for them in England ; that he sent his agents to the Duke of Savoy, a prince with whom he had no correspondence or commerce, and the next year, so engaged Cardinal Mazarine, and even terrified the Pope himself, without so much as doing any favour to the English Roman Catholics, that the Duke thought it necessary to restore all that he had taken from them, and renewed all those privileges they had formerly enjoyed. "So great (adds Echard) was the terror of his name; nothing being more usual than his saying, that his ships in the Medditerranean should visit Civita Vecchia, and the sound of his cannon should be heard in Rome."

Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipp'd stocks and stones,
Forget not in thy book : record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient folds
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To Heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all th' Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant : that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who having learn'd thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian wo.

ON HIS BLINDNESS.

WHEN I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he, returning, chide ;
Doth God exact day-labour, light denied ?
I fondly ask : but Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need
Either man's work, or his own gifts ; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best ; his state
Is kingly ; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest ;
They also serve who only stand and wait.

TO MR. LAWRENCE.*

LAWRENCE, of virtuous father virtuous son,
 Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
 Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
 Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
 From the hard season gaining? time will run
 On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire
 The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
 The lily and rose, that neither sow'd nor spun.
 What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
 Of Attic taste, with wine whence we may rise
 To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice,
 Warble immortal notes, and Tuscan air?
 He who of those delights can judge, and spare
 To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

TO CYRIAC SKINNER.†

CYRIAC, whose grandsire, on the royal bench
 Of British Themis, with no mean applause
 Pronounc'd, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
 Which others at their bar so often wrench;
 To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
 In mirth, that after, no repenting draws;
 Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
 And what the Swede intends, and what the French:
 To measure life learn thou betimes, and know

* This Mr. Lawrence was the Son of the President of Crom-
 ell's council.

† Cyriac Skinner was the son of William Skinner, Esqr., and
 grandson of Sir Vincent Skinner, and his mother was daughter
 of the famous Lord Chief Justice Coke. Mr. Wood relates that
 he was one of Harrington's political club, and sometimes held
 the chair; and further adds, that he was a merchant's son of
 London, an ingenious young gentleman, and scholar to John
 Milton.

Tow'rd solid good what leads the nearest way ;
 For other things mild Heaven a time ordains,
 And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
 That with superfluous burden loads the day,
 And when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

TO THE SAME.

CYRIAC, this three-years-day these eyes, though clear.
 To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
 Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot ;
 Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
 Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
 Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
 Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
 Of heart or hope ; but still bear up and steer
 Right onward. What supports me dost thou ask ?
 The conscience, Friend, to have lost them over plied
 In liberty's defence, my noble task,
 Of which all Europe talks from side to side.
 This thought might lead me through the world's
 vain mask
 Content, though blind, had I no better guide.

ON HIS DECEASED WIFE.*

METHOUGHT I saw my late espous'd saint
 Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the grave,
 Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
 Rescued from death by force, though pale and faint

* This was his second wife, Catharine, the daughter of Captain Woodcock of Hackney, who lived with him not above a year after their marriage, and died in child-bed of a daughter.

Mine, as whom wash'd from spot of child-bed taint,
Purification in th' old Law did save,
And such, as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind :
Her face was veil'd ; yet, to my fancied sight,
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shin'd
So clear, as in no face with more delight :
But O ! as to embrace me she inclin'd,
I wak'd ; she fled ; and day brought back my night.

PSALMS.

PSALM I.

[Done into verse, 1653.]

BLESS'D is the man who hath not walk'd astray
In counsel of the wicked, and i' th' way
Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat
Of scorers hath not sat : but in the great
Jehovah's law is ever his delight,
And in his law he studies, day and night.
He shall be as a tree which planted grows
By wat'ry streams, and in his season knows
To yield his fruit, and his leaf shall not fall,
And what he takes in hand shall prosper all.
Not so the wicked, but as chaff which fann'd
The wind drives, so the wicked shall not stand
In judgment, or abide their trial then,
Nor sinners in th' assembly of just men.
For the Lord knows the upright way of the just,
And the way of bad men to ruin must.

PSALM II.

[Done August 8, 1653.]

Terzette.

WHY do the Gentiles tumult, and the nations
Muse a vain thing, the kings of th' earth upstand
With power, and princes in their congregations

Lay deep their plots together through each land
 Against the Lord and his Messiah dear ?
 Let us break off, say they, by strength of hand
 Their bonds, and cast from us, no more to wear,
 Their twisted cords : He, who in heaven doth
 dwell,
 Shall laugh ; the Lord shall scoff them : then severe
 Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell
 And fierce ire trouble them ; but I, saith he,
 Anointed have my King (though ye rebel)
 On Sion my holy hill. A firm decree
 I will declare ; the Lord to me hath said,
 Thou art my son, I have begotten thee
 This day ; ask of me, and the grant is made ;
 As thy possession I on thee bestow
 The Heathen ; and as thy conquest to be sway'd,
 Earth's utmost bounds : them shalt thou bring full
 low
 With iron sceptre bruis'd, and them disperse
 Like to a potter's vessel shiver'd so.
 And now be wise at length, ye kings averse,
 Be taught, ye judges of the earth ; with fear
 Jehovah serve, and let your joy converse
 With trembling ; kiss the Son lest he appear
 In anger, and ye perish in the way,
 If once his wrath take fire, like fuel sere.
 Happy all those who have in him their stay.

P S A L M I I I.

[August 9, 1653.]

When he fled from Absalom.

LORD, how many are my foes !
 How many those,
 That in arms against me rise !
 Many are they,

That of my life distrustfully thus say ;
 No help for him in God there lies.
 But thou, Lord, art my shield, my glory,
 Thee, through my story,
 Th' exalter of my head I count ;
 Aloud I cried
 Unto Jehovah, he full soon replied,
 And heard me from his holy mount.
 I lay and slept ; I wak'd again ;
 For my sustain
 Was the Lord. Of many millions
 The populous rout
 I fear not, though encamping round about,
 They pitch against me their pavilions.
 Rise, Lord ; save me, my God ; for thou
 Hast smote, ere now,
 On the cheek-bone, all my foes ;
 Of men abhorr'd
 Hast broke the teeth. This help was from the
 Lord ;
 Thy blessing on thy people flows.

P S A L M I V.

[August 10, 1653.]

ANSWER me when I call,
 God of my righteousness ;
 In straits, and in distress,
 Thou didst me disenthral
 And set at large ; now spare,
 Now pity me, and hear my earnest prayer.
 Great ones, how long will ye
 My glory have in scorn ?
 How long be thus forborn
 Still to love vanity ?
 To love, to seek, to prize
 Things false and vain, and nothing else but lies ?
 Yet know the Lord hath chose,

Chose to himself apart,
 The good and meek of heart ;
 (For whom to choose he knows,)
 Jehovah from on high

Will hear my voice, what time to him I cry.

Be awed, and do not sin ;
 Speak to your hearts alone
 Upon your beds, each one,
 And be at peace within :
 Offer the offerings just

Of righteousness, and in Jehovah trust.

Many there be that say,
 Who yet will show us good ?
 Talking like this world's brood :

But, Lord, thus let me pray ;
 On us lift up the light,

Lift up the favour of thy count'nance bright.

Into my heart more joy
 And gladness thou hast put
 Than when a year of glut
 Their stores doth over cloy,
 And from their plenteous grounds

With vast increase their corn and wine abounds.

In peace at once will I
 Both lay me down and sleep ;
 For thou alone dost keep
 Me safe where'er I lie,
 As in a rocky cell

Thou, Lord alone, in safety mak'st me dwell.

PSALM V.

[August 12, 1653]

JEHOVAH ! to my words give ear,
 My meditation weigh ;
 The voice of my complaining hear,
 My King and God ; for unto thee I pray

Jehovah ! thou my early voice
Shalt in the morning hear ;
I' th' morning I to thee with choice
Will rank my prayers, and watch till thou appear.
For thou art not a God that takes
In wickedness delight ;
Evil with thee no biding makes ;
Fools or mad-men stand not within thy sight.
All workers of iniquity
Thou hat'st : and them unblest'd
Thou wilt destroy that speak a lie ;
The bloody and guileful man God doth detest ;
But I will, in thy mercies dear,
Thy numerous mercies, go
Into thy house ; I, in thy fear,
Will tow'rd thy holy temple worship low.
Lord ! lead me in thy righteousness,
Lead me, because of those
That do observe if I transgress ;
Set thy ways right before, where my step goes.
For, in his faltering mouth unstable,
No word is firm or sooth :
Their inside, troubles miserable ;
An open grave their throat, their tongue they smooth.
God ! find them guilty, let them fall
By their own counsels quell'd ;
Push them in their rebellions all
Still on ; for against thee they have rebell'd.
Then all, who trust in thee, shall bring
Their joy ; while thou from blame
Defend'st them, they shall ever sing
And shall triumph in thee, who love thy name :
For thou, Jehovah ! wilt be found
To bless the just man still ;
As with a shield, thou wilt surround
Him with thy lasting favour and good will.

P S A L M V I

[August 13, 1653.]

LORD, in thine anger do not reprehend me
Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct ;
Pity me, Lord, for I am much deject,
And very weak and faint ; heal and amend me ;
For all my bones, that e'en with anguish ake,
Are troubled, yea my soul is troubled sore,
And thou, O Lord ! how long ? Turn, Lord
 restore
My soul ; O save me for thy goodness' sake !
For in death no remembrance is of thee ;
Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise ?
Wearied I am with sighing out my days ;
Nightly my couch I make a kind of sea ;
My bed I water with my tears ; mine eye
Through grief consumes, is waxen old and dark
I' th' midst of all mine enemies that mark.
Depart all ye that work iniquity,
Depart from me ; for the voice of my weeping
The Lord hath heard ; the Lord hath heard my
 prayer,
My supplication with acceptance fair
The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping.
Mine enemies shall all be blank, and dash'd
With much confusion ; then, grown red with shame,
They shall return in haste the way they came,
And in a moment shall be quite abash'd.

PSALM VII.

[August 14, 1653.]

Upon the words of Chush the Benjamite against him

LORD, my God to thee I fly;
Save me, and secure me under
Thy protection, while I cry;
Lest, as a lion, (and no wonder,)
He haste to tear my soul asunder,
Tearing, and no rescue nigh.

Lord my God, if I have thought
Or done this; if wickedness
Be in my hands; if I have wrought
Ill to him that meant me peace;
Or to him have render'd less,
And not freed my foe for naught;

Let th' enemy pursue my soul
And overtake it, let him tread
My life down to the earth, and roll
In the dust my glory dead,
In the dust; and, there outspread,
Lodge it with dishonour foul.

Rise, Jehovah! in thine ire,
Rouse thyself amidst the rage
Of my foes that urge like fire;
And wake for me, their fury assuage;
Judgment here thou didst engage
And command, which I desire.

So th' assemblies of each nation
Will surround thee, seeking right;
Thence to thy glorious habitation
Return on high, and in their sight.

S*

Jehovah judgeth most upright
All people from the world's foundation.

Judge me, Lord ; be judge in this
According to my righteousness,
And the innocence which is
Upon me ; cause at length to cease
Of evil men the wickedness,
And their power that do amiss.

But the just establish fast,
Since thou art the just God that tries
Hearts and reins. On God is cast
My defence, and in him lies :
In him who both just and wise,
Saves the upright of heart at last.

God is a just judge and severe,
And God is every day offended ;
If the unjust will not forbear,
His sword he whets, his bow hath bended
Already, and for him intended
The tools of death, that wait him near.

(His arrows purposely made he
For them that prosecute :) Behold,
He travels big with vanity ;
Trouble he hath conceiv'd of old,
As in a womb ; and from that mould
Hath at length brought forth a lie.

He digged a pit and delv'd it deep,
And fell into the pit he made ;
His mischief, that due course doth keep.
Turns on his head, and his ill trade
Of violence will, undelay'd,
Fall on his crown with ruin steep.

Then will I Jehovah's praise
According to his justice raise,

And sing the name and Deity
Of Jehovah the Most High!

PSALM VIII.

[August 14, 1653.]

O JEHOVAH our Lord, how wondrous great
And glorious is thy Name through all the earth!
So as above the heavens thy praise to set
Out of the tender mouths of latest birth.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, thou
Hast founded strength, because of all thy foes,
To stint the enemy, and slack th' avenger's brow,
That bends his rage thy providence to oppose.

When I behold thy heavens, thy fingers' art,
The moon, and stars, which thou so bright hast
set

In the pure firmanent, then saith my heart,
O, what is man that thou rememb'rest yet,

And think'st upon him; or of man begot,
That him thou visit'st, and of him art found?
Scarce to be less than gods, thou mad'st his lot,
With honour and with state thou hast him crown'd.

O'er the works of thy hand thou mad'st him Lord,
Thou hast put all under his lordly feet;
All flocks, and herds, by thy commanding word,
All beasts that in the field or forest meet,

owl of the heavens, and fish that through the wet
Sea-paths in shoals do slide, and know no dearth:
O Jehovah our Lord, how wondrous great
And glorious is thy Name through all the earth!

P S A L M L X X X .

[April, 1648. J. M.]

Nine of the Psalms done into metre, wherein all but what is distinguished by inverted commas, are the very words of the text translated from the original

ΤΗΟΥ, Shepherd, that doth Israel 'keep'
Give ear 'in time of need ;'
Who leadeſt like a flock of ſheep
'Thy loved' Joſeph's ſeed ;

That ſitt'ſt between the Cherubs 'bright,'
'Between their wings outſpread ;'
Shine forth 'and from their cloud give light,'
'And on our foes thy dread.'

In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's,
And in Manasse's ſight,
Awake * thy ſtrength, come, and 'be ſeen'
'To' ſave us 'by thy might.'

Turn us, again ; 'thy grace divine'
'To us,' O God 'vouchſafe ;'
Cause thou thy face on us to ſhine,
And then we ſhall be ſafe.

Lord God of Hoſts ! how long wilt thou,
How long wilt thou declare
Thy † ſmoking wrath, 'and angry brow'
Against thy people's prayer !

Thou feed'ſt them with the bread of tears ;
Their bread with tears they eat ;
And mak'ſt them ‡ largely drink the tears
'Wherewith their cheeks are wet.'

* Gnorera.

† Gnashanta.

‡ Shaliſh.

A strife thou mak'st us 'and a prey'
To every neighbour foe ;
Among themselves they * laugh, they play, *
And * flouts at us they throw. .

Return us, 'and thy grace divine,'
O God of Hosts ! 'vouchsafe ;'
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

A vine from Egypt thou hast brought,
'Thy free love made it thine,'
And drov'st out nations 'proud and haught,'
To plant this 'lovely' vine.

Thou didst prepare for it a place,
And root it deep and fast,
That it 'began to grow apace,'
'And' fill'd the land 'at last.'

With her 'green' shade that cover'd 'all,'
The hills were 'overspread ;'
Her boughs as 'high as' cedars tall
'Advanc'd their lofty head.

Her branches 'on the western side'
Down to the sea she sent,
And 'upward' to that river 'wide'
Her other branches 'went.'

Why hast thou laid her hedges low,
And broken down her fence,
That all may pluck her, as they go,
'With rudest violence ?'

The 'tusked' boar, out of the wood,
Up turns it by the roots ;

* Jilgnagu.

Wild beasts there browse, and make their food
‘Her grapes and tender shoots.’

Return now, God of Hosts ! look down
From heaven, thy seat divine ;
Behold ‘us, but without a frown,’
And visit this ‘thy’ vine.

Visit this vine, which thy right hand
Hath set, and planted ‘long,’
And the young branch, that for thyself
Thou hast made firm and strong.

But now it is consum’d with fire,
And cut ‘with axes’ down ;
They perish at thy dreadful ire
At thy rebuke and frown.

Upon the man of thy right hand
Let thy ‘good’ hand be ‘laid ;’
Upon the son of man, whom thou
Strong for thyself hast made.

So shall we not go back from thee
‘To ways of sin and shame ;’
Quicken us thou ; then ‘gladly’ we
Shall call upon thy name.

Return us, ‘and thy grace divine,’
Lord God of Hosts ! ‘vouchsafe ;’
Cause thou thy face on us to shine ;
And then we shall be safe.

PSALM LXXXI.

To God our strength sing loud ‘and clear,’
Sing loud to God ‘our King ;’
To Jacob’s God ‘that all may hear,’
Loud acclamations ring.

Prepare a hymn, prepare a song,
The timbrel hither bring
The 'cheerful' psaltery bring along,
And harp 'with' pleasant 'string.'

Blow, 'as is wont,' in the new moon
With trumpets' 'lofty sound,'
Th' appointed time, the day whereon
Our solemn feast 'comes round.'

This was a statute 'given of old,'
For Israel 'to observe;'
A law of Jacob's God, 'to hold,'
'From whence they might not swerve.

This he a testimony ordain'd
In Joseph, 'not to change;'
When as he pass'd through Egypt land
The tongue I heard was strange.

From burden, 'and from slavish toil,'
I set his shoulder free :
His hands from pots, 'and miry soil,'
Deliver'd were 'by me.'

When trouble did thee sore assail,
'On me then' didst thou call ;
And I to free thee 'did not fail,'
And led thee out of thrall.'

I answer'd thee in * thunder deep
With clouds encompass'd round,
I tried thee at the water 'steep'
Of Meriba 'renown'd.'

Hear, O my people, 'hearken well,'
I testify to thee,

* Be Sether ragnam.

• Thou ancient stock of Israel
If thou wilt list to me,

Throughout the land of thy abode
No alien God shall be,
Nor shalt thou to a foreign god
In honour bend thy knee.

I am the Lord thy God, which brought
Thee out of Egypt land ;
Ask large enough, and I, 'besought,'
Will grant thy full demand.

And yet my people would not 'hear,'
'Nor' hearken to my voice ;
And Israel, 'whom I lov'd so dear,'
Mislik'd me for his choice.

Then did I leave them to their will,
And to their wand'ring mind ;
Their own conceits they follow'd still,
Their own devices blind.

O that my people would 'be wise,'
'To' serve me 'all their days !'
And O, that Israel would 'advise'
'To' walk my 'righteous' ways !

Then would I soon bring down their foes,
'That now so proudly rise ;'
And turn my hand against 'all those'
'That are' their enemies.

Who hate the Lord should 'then be fain'
'To' bow to him and bend ;
But 'they, his people, should remain,'
Their time should have no end.

And he would feed them 'from the shock'
With flower of finest wheat,

And satisfy them from the rock,
With honey 'for their meat.'

PSALM LXXII.

God in the * great * assembly stands
'Of kings and lordly states ;'
Among † the gods, † on both his hands
He judges and debates.

How long will ye ‡ pervert the right
With ‡ judgment false and wrong,
Favouring the wicked, 'by your might,'
'Who thence grow bold and strong ?'

Regard § the weak § and fatherless,
Despatch § the poor § man's cause,
And || raise the man in deep distress
By || just and equal laws.

Defend the poor and desolate,
And rescue from the hands
Of wicked men the low estate
Of him 'that help demands.'

They know not, nor will understand,
In darkness they walk on,
The earth's foundations all are ¶ mov'd,
And ¶ out of order gone.

I said that ye were gods ; yea, all
The sons of God Most High ;
But ye shall die like men, and fall
As other princes die.'

Rise God ; ** judge thou the earth 'in might,
This 'wicked' 'earth redress,'

Bagnadath-el. † Bekerev. ‡ Tishphetu gnavel. ¶ Shiptu-dal.
§ Hatzdiku. ¶ Jimmotu. ** Shipta.

For thou art he who shalt by right
The nations all possess.

PSALM LXXXIII.

Be not thou silent 'now at length,'
O God! hold not thy peace;
Sit thou not still O God of 'strength,'
'We cry, and do not cease.'

For lo! thy 'furious' foes 'now' * swell
And * storm outrageously,
And they that hate thee 'proud and fell'
Exalt their heads full high.

Against thy people they † contrive
Their ‡ plots and councils deep;
Them § to ensnare they chiefly strive,
Whom || thou dost hide and keep.

Come, let us cut them off, say they,
Till they no nation be;
That Israel's name for ever may
Be lost in memory.

For they consult ¶ with all their might,
And all, as one in mind
Themselves against thee they unite,
And in firm union bind!

The tents of Edom, and the brood
Of 'scornful' Ishmael,
Moab, with them of Hagar's blood,
'That in the desert dwell';

Gebal and Ammon 'there conspire,'
And 'hateful' Amalec,

* Jehemajun.

† Jagnarimu.

‡ Sod.

§ Jirthjagnatsu gnal. || Tsephuneca.

¶ Lev Jackdan.

The Philistines and they of Tyre,
‘Whose bounds the sea doth check;’

With them ‘great’ Ashur also bands,
‘And doth confirm the knot;
‘All these have lent their armed hands’
To aid the sons of Lot.

Do to them as to Midian ‘bold,’
‘That wasted all the coast,’
To Sisera; and, as ‘is told,’
‘Thou didst’ to Jabin’s host.’

‘When at the brook of Kishon ‘old,’
‘They were repuls’d and slain,
At Endor quite cut off, and roll’d
As dung upon the plain.

As Zeb and Oreb, evil sped,
So let their princes speed;
As Zeba, and Zalmunna ‘bled,’
So let their princes ‘bleed.’

‘For they amidst their pride’ have said,
By right now shall we seize
God’s houses, ‘and will now invade’
Their * stately palaces.

My God! oh make them as a wheel,
‘No quiet let them find;’
Giddy and ‘restless,’ let ‘them reel’
Like stubble from the wind.

As ‘when’ an ‘aged’ wood takes fire
‘Which on a sudden strays,’
The ‘greedy’ flame runs higher and higher
Till all the mountains blaze;

* Neoth Elohim bears both.

So with thy whirlwind them pursue,
 And with thy tempest chase ;
 And, * till they * yield thee honour due,
 Lord ! fill with shame their face.

Asham'd, and troubled let them be,
 Troubled, and sham'd for ever ;
 Ever confounded, and so die
 With shame, ' and scape it never.

Then shall they know, that Thou, whose name
 Jehovah is alone,
 Art the Most High, ' and thou the same'
 O'er all the earth ' art One !'

PSALM LXXXIV.

How lovely are thy dwellings fair !
 O Lord of Hosts, how dear
 The ' pleasant' tabernacles are,
 ' Where thou dost dwell so near !'

My soul doth long and almost die
 Thy courts, O Lord, to see,
 My heart and flesh aloud do cry,
 O living God ! for thee.

There e'en the sparrow ' freed from wrong,'
 Hath found a house of ' rest ;'
 The swallow there to lay her young
 Hath built her ' brooding' nest ;

E'en by thy altars, Lord of Hosts,
 ' They find their safe abode ;'
 ' And home they fly from round the coasts'
 Toward thee, ' my King, my God !

* They seek thy name. Heb.

Happy, who in thy house reside,
Where thee they ever praise!
Happy, whose strength in thee doth 'bide,
And in their hearts thy ways!

They pass through Baca's 'thirsty' vale,
'That dry and barren ground;'
As through a fruitful wat'ry dale
Where springs and showers abound.

They journey on from strength to strength
'With joy and gladsome cheer,'
'Till all before 'our' God 'at length
In Sion do appear.

Lord God of Hosts! hear 'now' my prayer,
O Jacob's God give ear;
Thou God, our shield, look on the face
Of thy anointed 'dear.'

For one day in thy courts 'to be'
Is better, 'and more bless'd,'
Than 'in the joys of vanity'
A thousand days 'at best.'

I in the temple of my God,
Had rather keep a door,
Than dwell in tents, 'and rich abode,'
With sin, 'for evermore.'

For God the Lord, both sun and shield,
Gives grace and glory 'bright;'
No good from them shall be withheld
Whose ways are just and right.

Lord 'God' of Hosts! that reign'st on high;
That man is 'truly' bless'd,
Who 'only on thee doth rely,
And in thee only rest.

T*

PSALM LXXXV.

Thy land to favour graciously
Thou hast not, Lord, been slack;
Thou hast from 'hard' captivity
Returned Jacob back.

Th' iniquity thou didst forgive
'That wrought' thy people wo;
And all their sin, 'that did thee grieve,'
Hast hid 'where none shall know.'

Thine anger all thou hadst remov'd,
And 'calmly' didst return
From thy * fierce wrath, which we had prov'd,
Far worse than fire to burn.

God of our saving health and peace!
Turn us, and us restore;
Thine indignation cause to cease
Toward us, 'and chide no more.'

Wilt thou be angry without end,
For ever angry thus?
Wilt thou thy frowning ire extend
From age to age on us?

Wilt thou not † turn, and 'hear our voice'
And us again † revive,
That so thy people may rejoice
By thee preserv'd alive?

Cause us to see thy goodness, Lord,
To us thy mercy show,
Thy saving health to us afford,
'And life in us renew.'

* Heb. 'The burning heat of thy wrath.'

† Heb. 'Turn to quicken us.'

'And now,' what God the Lord will speak,
I will 'go straight and' hear,
For to his people he speaks peace,
And to his saints 'full dear.'

To his dear saints he will speak peace ;
But let them never more
Return to folly, 'but surcease'
'To trespass as before.'

Surely, to such as do him fear
Salvation is at hand ;
And glory shall 'ere long appear,'
'To' dwell within our land.

Mercy and Truth 'that long were miss'd,
Now 'joyfully' are met ;
'Sweet' Peace and Righteousness have kiss'd,
'And hand in hand are set.'

Truth from the earth, 'like to a flower,'
Shall bud and blossom 'then ;'
And Justice, from her heavenly bower,
Look down 'on mortal men.'

The Lord will also then bestow
Whatever thing is good ;
Our land shall forth in plenty throw
Her fruits 'to be our food.'

Before him Righteousness shall go,
'His royal harbinger ;'
Then * will he come, and not be slow ;
His footsteps cannot err.

* Heb. 'He will set his steps to the way.'

PSALM LXXXVI.

Thy 'gracious' ear, O Lord ! incline,
O hear me, 'I thee pray ;'
For I am poor, and almost pine
With need, 'and sad decay.'

Preserve my soul ; for I * have trod
Thy ways, and love the just,
Save thou thy servant, O my God !
Who 'still' in thee doth trust.

Pity me, Lord, for daily thee
I call ; O make rejoice
Thy servant's soul ; for, Lord to thee
I lift my soul 'and voice.'

For thou art good, thou, Lord ! art prone
To pardon, thou to all
Art full of mercy, thou 'alone'
To them that on thee call.

Unto my supplication, Lord,
Give ear, and to the cry
Of my 'incessant' prayers afford
Thy hearing graciously.

I, in the day of my distress,
Will call on thee 'for aid ;'
For thou wilt 'grant' me 'free access,
'And answer 'what I pray'd.'

Like thee among the gods is none,
O Lord ; nor any works
'Of all that other gods have done'
Like to thy 'glorious' works.

* Heb. 'I am good, loving, a doer of good and holy things.'

The Nations all whom thou hast made
Shall come, 'and all shall frame
To bow them low before thee, Lord,
And glorify thy Name.

For great thou art, and wonders great
By thy strong hand are done ;
Thou 'in thy everlasting seat,'
Remainest God alone.

Teach me, O Lord, thy way 'most right ;'
I in thy truth will bide ;
To fear thy name my heart unite,
'So it shall never slide.'

Thee will I praise, O Lord, my God !
'Thee honour and adore'
With my whole heart, and blaze abroad
Thy name for evermore.

For great thy mercy is tow'rd me,
And thou hast freed my soul,
E'en from the lowest hell set free
'From deepest darkness foul.'

O God, the proud against me rise
And violent men are met
To seek my life, and in their eyes
No fear of thee have set,

But thou, Lord, art the God most mild,
Readiest thy grace to show,
Slow to be angry, and 'art styled,'
Most merciful, most true.

O, turn to me 'thy face at length,'
And me have mercy on ;
Unto thy servant give thy strength,'
And save thy handmaid's son.

Some sign of good to me afford,
And let my foes 'then' see,
And be asham'd ; because thou, Lord,
Dost help and comfort me.

PSALM LXXXVII.

Among the holy mountains 'high'
Is his foundation fast ;
'There seated is his sanctuary,'
'His temple there is plac'd.'

Sion's 'fair' gates the Lord loves more
Than all the dwellings 'fair'
Of Jacob's 'land, though there be store,'
'And all within his care.'

City of God, most glorious thing
Of thee 'abroad' are spoke ;
I mention Egypt 'where proud kings'
'Did our forefathers yoke ;'

I mention Babel to my friends,
Philistia 'full of scorn ;
And Tyre with Ethiops' 'utmost ends,'
Lo, this man there was born :

But 'twice that praise shall in our ear'
Be said of Sion 'last ;'
This, and this man was born in her ;
High God shall fix her fast.

The Lord shall write it in a scroll
That ne'er shall be out-worn,
When he the nations doth enrol,
That this man there was born.

Both they who sing, and they who dance.
'With sacred songs are there,'

In thee 'fresh brooks, and soft streams glance,
'And' all my fountains 'clear.'

PSALM LXXXVIII.

Lord God ! that dost me save and ep.
All day to thee I cry ;
And all night long before thee 'weep,'
Before thee 'prostrate lie.'

Into thy presence let my pray . .
'With sighs devout ascend ;'
And to my cries, that, 'ceaseless are,'
Thine ear with favour bend.

For cloy'd with woes and trouble sore,
Surcharg'd my soul doth lie ;
My life at 'Death's uncheerful door ;'
Unto the grave draws nigh.

Reckon'd I am with them that pass
Down to the 'dismal' pit ;
I am a * man, but weak, alas !
And for that name unfit.

From life discharg'd and parted quite
Among the dead to 'sleep ;'
And like the slain in 'bloody fight'
That in the grave lie 'deep.'

Whom thou rememberest no more,
Dost never more regard,
Them from thy hand deliver'd o'er
'Death's hideous house hath barr'd.'

Thou in the lowest pit 'profound,'
Hast set me 'all forlorn,'

* Heb. 'A man without manly strength.'

Where thickest darkness ' hovers round,'
In horrid deeps ' to mourn.'

Thy wrath, ' from which no shelter saves,'
Full sore doth press on me ;
Thou * break'st upon me all thy waves,
And * all thy waves break me.

Thou dost my friends from me estrange,
And mak'st me odious,
Me to them odious, ' for they change,'
And I here pent up thus.

Through sorrow, and affliction great,
Mine eye grows dim and dead :
Lord ! all the day I thee entreat
My hands to thee I spread.

Wilt thou do wonders on the dead ?
Shall the deceas'd arise,
And praise thee ' from their loathsome ' bed'
' With pale and hollow eyes ?'

Shall they thy loving kindness tell
On whom the grave ' hath hold ?'
Or they, who in perdition ' dwell,'
Thy faithfulness ' unfold ?'

In darkness can thy mighty ' hand'
' Or' wondrous acts be known ?
' Thy justice in the ' gloomy' land
Of ' dark' oblivion.

But I to thee, O Lord ! do cry,
' Ere yet my life be spent ;'
And ' up to thee' my prayer doth ' hie'
Each morn, and thee prevent.

* The Hebr. bears both.

Why wilt thou, Lord, my soul forsake,
 And hide thy face from me,
 That am already bruise'd, and * shake
 With terror sent from thee ?

Bruise'd and afflicted, and ' so low '
 As ready to expire :
 While I thy terrors undergo
 Astonish'd with thine ire.

Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow ;
 Thy threat'nings cut me through :
 All day they round about me go,
 Like waves they me pursue.

Lover and friend thou hast remov'd,
 And sever'd from me far ;
 They ' fly me now,' whom I have lov'd,
 And as in darkness are,

A Paraphrase on PSALM CXIV.

This and the following Psalm were done by the
 Author at fifteen years old.

WHEN the bless'd seed of Terah's faithful son,
 After long toil, their liberty had won ;
 And pass'd from Pharien fields to Canaan land,
 Led by the strength of the Almighty's hand ;
 Jehovah's wonders were in Israel shown,
 His praise and glory was in Israel known :
 That saw the troubled sea, and shivering, fled,
 And sought to hide his froth-becurled head
 Low in the earth ; Jordan's clear streams recoil,
 As a faint host that hath receiv'd the foil.
 The high huge-bellied mountains skip, like rams
 Amongst their ewes ; the little hills, like lambs.

* Heb. Præ Concussione.

Why fled the ocean ? and why skipp'd the mountains ?
Why turn'd Jordan tow'rd his crystal fountains ?
Shake, earth ; and at the presence be aghast
Of Him that ever was, and aye shall last ;
That glassy floods from rugged rocks can crush,
And make soft rills from fiery flint-stones gush.

P S A L M C X X X V I .

LET us, with a gladsome mind,
Praise the Lord, for he is kind ;
For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

Let us blaze his name abroad,
For of gods, he is the God.
For his, &c.

O, let us his praises tell,
Who doth the wrathful tyrants quell.
For his, &c.

Who, with his miracles, doth make
Amazed heaven and earth to shake.
For his, &c.

Who, by his wisdom, did create
The painted heavens so full of state.
For his, &c.

Who did the solid earth ordain
To rise above the watery plain.
For his, &c.

Who, by his all-commanding might,
Did fill the new-made world with light
For his, &c.

And caus'd the golden-tressed sun
All the day long his course to run
For his, &c.

The horned moon to shine by night,
Amongst her spangled sisters bright.
For his, &c.

He, with his thunder-clasping hand,
Smote the first-born of Egypt land.
For his, &c.

And, in despite of Pharaoh fell,
He brought from thence his Israel.
For his, &c.

The ruddy waves he cleft in twain
Of the Erythræan main.
For his, &c.

The floods stood still like walls of glass,
While the Hebrew bands did pass.
For his, &c.

But full soon they did devour
The tawny king with all his power.
For his, &c.

His chosen people he did bless,
In the wasteful wilderness.
For his, &c.

In bloody battle he brought down
Kings of prowess, and renown.
For his, &c.

He foil'd bold Seon and his host,
That rul'd the Amorrean coast.
For his, &c.

And large-limb'd Og he did subdue,
With all his over-hardy crew.
For his, &c.

And to his servant-Israel,
He gave their land therein to dwell.
For his, &c.

He hath, with a piteous eye
Beheld us in our misery.
For his, &c.

And freed us from the slavery
Of the invading enemy.
For his, &c.

All living creatures he doth feed,
And with full hand supplies their need,
For his, &c.

Let us therefore warble forth
His mighty majesty and worth.
For his, &c.

That his mansion hath on high
Above the reach of mortal eye.
For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

THE END.

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: March 2009

Preservation Technologies

A WORLD LEADER IN COLLECTIONS PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 159 620 2

